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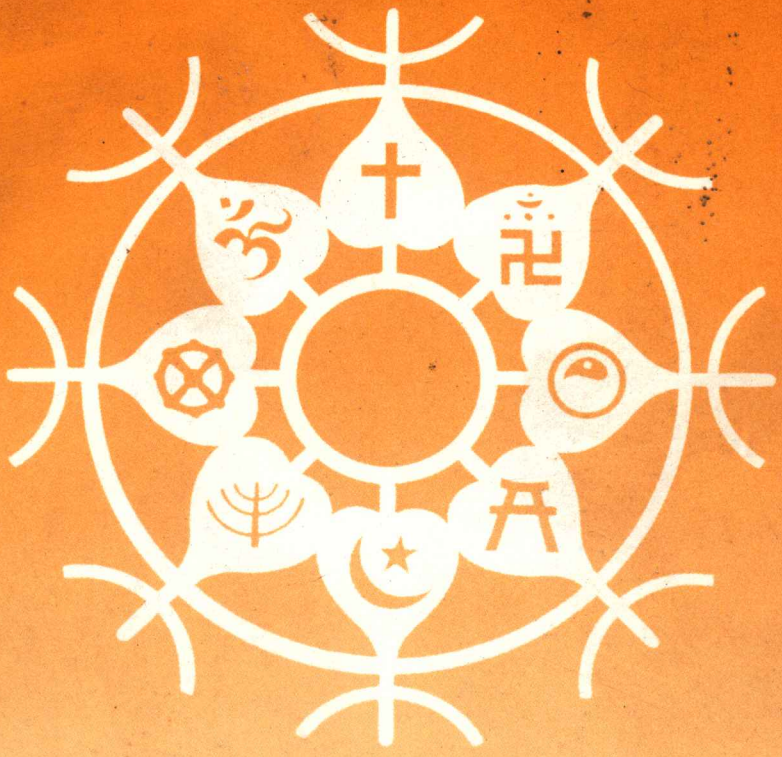

CULTURE OF LIFE

January-March 2005 Vol. 30, No. 1

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Editorial

CULTURE OF LIFE

Culture is the sum total of attitudes and perspectives, behaviour patterns and adopted standards, views and ways of life that envelop the entire gamut of reality through the interpretation and involvement of human beings for the sake of an enhanced state of existence at all levels. In order to have a culture, it is essential that life – in all its forms – is accorded respect and reverence. Among various forms of life, because of its uniqueness in terms of self-consciousness and the ability to establish lasting, meaningful, and purposeful relationships, human life has a prime place. In fact, any culture presupposes human existence: only human beings can set off a culture; for devoid of humanity's central role along with its specific emphasis on the enhancement of human life, no culture would be worth the name. Although we can identify a symbiotic relationship between human life and culture, the central role of life, especially human life, cannot be overlooked. The aim of humanity as a whole must be to evolve a culture of life, a situation where all would subscribe to a positive view of life and shape a creative way of life, culminating in the enhancement of both life and culture.

It is true that human beings have been involved both in the acts of destroying and enhancing life in various forms. However, despite the destructive activities initiated by many a member of the human species, nature, by its own ways, and in and through the dynamic, conscious, affirmative, and cooperative involvement of the majority of human beings, has been maintaining various cultures of life all through the human history. In fact, while some consciously tried to disrupt the culture of life that existed and flourished, there were equally – or, say, more effective – powerful attempts on the part of others to defend, safeguard, protect, preserve, and enhance life, especially human life, itself being the foundation of the values we cherish. The primacy enjoyed by human life among all forms of life has not yet been debased, which I consider to be the most optimistic result of a continued human quest for development, permanence, and excellence.

However, in the wake of an emerging exclusive thrust on values such as quality, economy, efficiency, etc., which finally turn out to be counterproductive to a large extent, and the manipulative strategies of the vested interests, including the *almighty* media of the twenty-first century and the remotely controlled, corrupt governments whose legislations and

governance increasingly have nothing to do with the moral foundations of humanity, our age witnesses a growing tendency to enthrone a culture of death in place of life. Although its votaries are comparatively smaller in numbers, the reign of a culture of death tends to be catching up more with the so-called elite and the economically and socially well-paced groups, most of them belonging to the upper strata of the society, to whose standards of behaviour the majority look up and try to emulate. The emphasis on quality of life in every sphere, and the projections of a possible glossy and picturesque quality enhancement thrust (against the more demanding, ever-dragging and -increasing quantity considerations) in private as well as social life create a false aura of goodness and rightness among the naïve and the innocent.

In this context we should distinguish between two groups: the first, endorsing a culture of death as aggressively as possible, of whom at least a minority making economic and career advantage (mostly at the cost of human lives), and the second, adopting a lethargic insensitivity to the life of others. Although the first seems to be dangerous, as this group is more outspoken, the second is debasing the foundations of value of life in an indirect but very subtle way. The utter lack of concern for the lives of many a person in the society – especially those who are ill treated either by neglect in the family or as a result of social ostracism – is absolutely outrageous. There is an unheard cry for attention and openness towards many unbecoming practices meted out to human beings themselves in the neighbourhood of almost all of us. How many of us dare to respond, to take up the challenges, and face the uncertainties? The resulting personal initiatives would definitely make a difference, hopefully resulting in launching a positive transformation both in outlook and action patterns.

There is an alarming tendency, especially among a group of intellectuals – whose presence, penetration, and activity are all pervasive among the national and international media and bureaucracies – who tend to value only those human lives which are qualitatively better placed. In fact, they subscribe to and practice a preferential option for the *best*, based on qualitative utility concerns.

A dangerous line of argument, for example, is initiated by Peter Singer, the most vibrant philosophical exponent of consequentialist approach to ethics in the West, in the following passage:

> ... the fact that a being is a human being, in the sense of a member of the species Homo sapiens, is *not relevant* to the wrongness of killing

> it; it is, rather, characteristics like rationality, autonomy, and self-consciousness that make a difference. Infants lack these characteristics. Killing them, therefore, cannot be equated with killing normal human beings, or any other self-conscious beings.[1]

The slippery slope is obvious in the sentence that follows the quoted passage: "This conclusion is not limited to infants..." The culture of death defended by Singer extends its wings far and wide. After having endorsed the method of "suicide machine" developed and *prescribed* by Dr. Jack Kevorkian, a Michigan Pathologist, Singer narrates the "successful saga" of those proponents of voluntary euthanasia as follows:

> There is now one country in which doctors can openly *help* their patients to die in a peaceful and dignified way. In the Netherlands, a series of court cases during the 1980s upheld a doctor's right to assist a patient to die, even if that assistance amounted to giving the patient a lethal injection. Doctors in the Netherlands who comply with certain guidelines ... can now quite openly carry out euthanasia and can report this on the death certificate without fear of prosecution. It has been estimated that about 2,300 deaths each year result from euthanasia carried out in this way.[2]

A glossy but wrong understanding of peace and dignity at the deathbed is proposed to bypass the moral vacuum resulting from the insensitivity to life and its dynamics, when it concerns the lives of the yet-to-be-born, yet-to-be-self-conscious, dependent and disabled, sick and dying. It is put forth as the only way to enhance the standards of living and the quality of

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[1]Peter Singer, *Practical Ethics*, 2nd Edition, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993, 182; emphasis added. In this connection it would be worth turning to some of the assumptions of Singer, which are farfetched and baseless. For example, he categorically asserts in his *Practical Ethics* that "the parents do not want the disabled child to live" (183). If this assertion were true, how come that many disabled children continue to live, mostly with their own biological parents? Later, in the same work he holds that life begins in any "morally significant sense when there is awareness of one's existence over time. The metaphor of life as a journey also provides a reason for holding that in infancy, life's voyage has scarcely begun" (189-190). The implied sense of the text is that the unborn and the newly born do not deserve the rights accessible to the grownups; the value of their existence is a concession from the *able* and "rational, autonomous and self-conscious" *in actuality*. What does he refer to as "morally significant"? Can it be based on a mere metaphor – "life as a journey"?

[2]Singer, *Practical Ethics*, 176-178; emphasis added.

life of those who are already born and grown up, especially in the context of the limited available resources in this world. If at all anybody feels guilty in adopting such an approach, Singer recommends an abandoning of "those doctrines about the sanctity of human life,"[3] as such doctrines tend to 'emotionally' and 'intellectually' curtail the culture of death unleashed by its subscribers. According to Singer, acceptance of any doctrine founded on the inherent value of life and its inviolability is tantamount to "the refusal to accept killing."[4]

We have no difficulty in accepting death, as it is inherently part of life itself. In fact, acceptance of death should accompany a properly valid moral perspective. Equating death with killing, however, is a farfetched attempt, and a morally unacceptable stand, irrespective of the mode and the need of killing, especially when it comes to taking the life of a human being – in any form.

Life is the central focus of medical science; the very purpose for which medical science exists is to promote, support, and enhance life in all forms, and at all levels of existence. The service rendered by millions of healthcare personnel all over the world is, indeed, a great service rendered to the humanity as a whole. In the context of the development and existence of healthcare, it is a right of every human person to receive appropriate care, and cure as much as feasible, and it cannot be relegated to the level of a convenient privilege extended by the healthcare professionals. However, proponents of a culture of death do not hesitate to drag medical science as well as healthcare personnel into life-denying compromises and controversies around issues of human life. In fact, the very foundation upon which medical science is built, and is thriving on, is life itself; the very purpose of medicine itself – traditionally identified as "cure and care" – is to promote, support, and enhance human life in its multifarious forms.[5] The recent thrust on quality healthcare, though

[3]Singer, *Practical Ethics*, 175.

[4]Singer, *Practical Ethics*, 175.

[5]My personal association with medical professionals has always been very enriching and life-affirming. Their unflinching commitment in catering to human life – even when some of them were at the brink of death or 'inhumane' existence according to the standards accepted by the culture of death proponents – is praiseworthy and promising. However, the pressure of an aggressive, quality-oriented, profit-motivated, and business-pro healthcare approach faces colossal losses, which, in turn, tend to de-motivate even those who are assertive of and affirming human life and its inherent value. Isn't catering to and saving human life in

praiseworthy as far as the effectiveness and efficiency are concerned, has caused the sidetracking of at least one important dimension of healthcare, i.e., the caring dimension (due to an over-emphasis on the curative procedures, which bring about tangible and immediate results).

Moreover, the major interests of a large group of physicians belonging to the modern globalised era lie in lifestyle and livelihood; unfortunately, the radical changes in healthcare delivery system promotes the role of the physician as clinical and economic manager rather than a professionally committed healthcare animator who has to awaken everyone involved to take life-enhancing decisions and to put them into practice, even if it were to personally inconvenience him or her, and thus to be an advocate of life in any patient.[6] The economic and career advantages scrupulously enjoyed by such tend to jeopardise the prospects of even those who are willing to spend their lives for the sake of promoting human life. Further, this tends to dictate the poor response on the part of

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any predicamental situation worth the troubles, even if it were to involve colossal financial losses? Can anybody who is professionally trained to be the caretaker of human life be an agent of death? It cannot be without involving internal contradiction: human life is to be affirmed, protected and promoted in medical care.

[6]The Hippocratic Oath (5th century BC) – both in its classical and many modern versions, taken by the medical professional as they begin their medical practice – obviously expresses the positive affirmation of human life. A pertinent passage in the Oath reads: "I will neither give a deadly drug to anybody who asked for it, nor will I make a suggestion to this effect. Similarly, I will not give to a woman an abortive remedy" (Ludwig Edelstein, trans., *The Hippocratic Oath: Text, Translation, and Interpretation*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1943). However, in the context of the present day practices upheld by many of these professionals, some tend to sarcastically rename the Oath as "Hypocritic Oath." The reasons are obvious from the following survey findings: "According to a 1993 survey of 150 US and Canadian medical schools, for example, only 14 percent of modern oaths prohibit euthanasia, 11 percent hold covenant with a deity, 8 percent foreswear abortion, and a mere 3 percent forbid sexual contact with patients – all maxims held sacred in the classical version. The original calls for free tuition for medical students and for doctors never to 'use the knife' (that is, conduct surgical procedures) – both obviously out of step with modern-day practice. Perhaps most telling, while the classical oath calls for 'the opposite' of pleasure and fame for those who transgress the oath, fewer than half of oaths taken today insist the taker be held accountable for keeping the pledge" ("The Hippocratic Oath Today: Meaningless Relic or Invaluable Moral Guide?" http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/doctors/oath_today.html).

many physicians in availing themselves for life enhancement programmes and procedures in healthcare.

Along with and apart from the healthcare sector, more serious danger lurks in the legislative authorities and judiciary. Although many nations subscribe to democratic form of governance, the actual legislative procedures – and to a great extent, even the functioning of the judiciary – are being manoeuvred by a powerful minority that has access to the inner sanctuaries and strongholds of political clout.

The natural and proclaimed aim of any state being the protection and enhancement of the public welfare or the common good, all members of the legislature and the judiciary have a responsibility to make sure that every adopted step ensures the realization of the same end. Human life is the basic substratum of this common good; in fact, in the absence of human life, there does not arise any consideration for common good at all. Then, naturally, the members of the legislature and judiciary have a bounden responsibility to ensure that life is respected, protected, and augmented through the enactment of laws and judicial activities. Any government and legal system that are accepted by the people should validate itself in terms of sound moral foundations; moreover, exercise of their powers could qualify to be moral only when it ultimately counters life negation in every form, and positively results in life affirmation and total life enhancement of the society. For example, legalisation of abortion, euthanasia, etc. – which has made out to be morally *normal* and legally *acceptable* in many democracies, through the concerted effort of legislative, executive, and judiciary bodies in any given state, with the powerful backup of the vested interests – clearly goes against the demands of a life affirming moral system. Certainly, the moral foundations of the authority of such a state are challengeable. The moral foundations of the society are eroding due to a lack of commitment on the part of the state, the acclaimed custodian and protector of the age-old value systems and foundations of human life. The net result of all these is that the future of humanity appears to be so bleak from the perspective of a culture of life.

Through the powerful backing of the media – enjoying a wider reach in terms of the globalised coverage – this minority is capable of manipulating the majority opinion to such an extent that what is finally legislated by the ruling government is apparently acclaimed to be the choice of the majority! The subtle manner adopted in this game is being sustained by the intelligence and finances lavishly supplied by

multinational companies, whose stakes all over the world continue to determine and change the course of events in human history and cultures.

Many of the recent aggressive international interventions in the Asian and African continents – which are conveniently christened as the "war waged against the 'terrorist' forces" by the US and its allies, with a proclaimed aim to make this world a better place to live – are said to be resulting from the hidden agendas of the multinational companies (occasionally, admitted to be the national interests of the US). It is a disquieting as well as a life-threatening situation in which the unilateral decisions of one nation – apparently democratic in governance – turn out to be the criterion and the exclusive controlling factor in deciding the affairs of the world and right and wrong for everyone. It is alarming from our perspective because the only motivating factor in this game – "war against terrorism" – seems to be exclusively economic benefits to the US and its allies, at the outright neglect of the rest of the world. It is a threat to the humanity; it is a continued challenge to the culture of life as well. The number of innocent people who have been killed and the destruction of hard-earned resources in many a country in the name of eliminating terrorism from the face of the earth have gone unnoticed (or, altogether neglected) by the 'almighties' among the media and *all-life-patronising* policies of the US. The value of life in the case of non-US persons seems to be quite low – or, even non-existent – according to the policies of various US-controlled agencies engaged in this *war game*. It is obvious that they adopt a double standard in applying the value of life criterion in the case of those who are in favour of and against the US. If we objectively analyse what had been happening before and after 9/11 all over the world, the number of people who have been killed has gone up without any due proportion, the respect and reverence accorded to human life have suffered enormously, especially in dealing with the lives of Afro-Asians, and, finally, the world is gradually becoming the worst place to live in as human life is endangered and uncertainties are building up from all corners.

The strategic manoeuvring employed by the so-called developed world in manipulating a large majority of the human race results in an almost total neglect and denial of life of those humans who are categorised to be of sub-human or even of animal status (for example, consider the treatment meted out to the prisoners of war in the recent Afghan and Iraq conflicts). This distressing situation calls for a positive involvement on the

part of those who, finally, turn out to be the losers of life. While the 'divide and rule' policy will be continuously employed by these forces to get their selfish designs fulfilled by hook or crook, others have to see to it that they do not become self-annihilating preys in the hands of the proponents of a culture of death. The self-alienating and destructive strategies of individuals as well as nations should be replaced by a strong collective will that is capable of binding and holding together the fragile lives of many a human, which, in turn, would become the strongest force on the face of the earth, if groomed properly.

The thriving of human life is possible in the twenty-first century only through the cooperative activity of human beings – although this may seem to be a mirage, an unrealizable fantastic ideal for ever. In fact, the human inventiveness that has characterised the contemporary world in many of its facets has been capable of ushering in a unitary world, a global village with dynamic networking of human as well as technical relationships. Although there are many undesirable and unwelcome attitudes, thoroughly manipulative strategies, and unhealthy practices, that tend to belittle this noble human leap towards a healthy and holistic existence in the globalised world of the present, the healthy trends have proved beyond doubt that interdependence is no more a theory or a sheer ideal, but a fact. In place of independence that had marked the modern times, interdependence has evolved to be the most obvious fact of a meaningful and effective mode of human existence. Thus, interdependence is the condition and quality of human existence in the contemporary world.

This issue of the *Journal of Dharma*, therefore, tries to address various aspects of a culture of life with a view to be instrumental in enhancing human life in its totality. The first entry, "Towards a Self-giving Love: A Biblical Model of Seven-Stage Development of Inter-Personal Dynamics," by Paul Savio Pudussery, delves deep into the biblical sources, and establishes the need for transcending individuality through our interpersonal dynamics. Through a meticulous analysis, the author establishes the transition of a disciple from one stage to the other – i.e., "how humanity is asked to move away from the most primitive form of unlimited revenge to the highest ideal of self-sacrificing love" – culminating in the supreme expression of love, the total self-giving love. It is "a love that spends itself to the extent of sacrificing one's life for the other," which, according to the author, would promote healthy and wholesome interpersonal relationships.

In the second article, "Life and Law," Cherian Thunduparampil establishes the capacity of law, especially the Canon Law of the Catholic Church, to be life affirmative through "facilitating the social as well as individual life in bringing about common good through the establishment of good order." The research positively affirms that "penal laws in the Church ... constitute an important section that explicitly tells about the life enhancing dimension of laws." Further, according to the findings of the author, "laws function as a special instrument that creates order in the Church community where all recognize and accept mutually the rights of others to facilitate the life and smooth functioning of the community."

A well-researched article on *haṭhayoga* by Ellen Goldberg analyses the process of self-cultivation resulting from the practice of *haṭhayoga*. It is contended that the practice of techniques adopted in *haṭhayoga* "guide or navigate the practitioner systematically through the constitution of the individual human body and the psyche to a direct experience of reality conceived in terms of its own particular cultural orientation as Śiva-Śakti, a primordial unity that includes within itself the conjoined masculine and feminine principles." Such a method of culturing human mind-body unity helps us "to see more clearly the enormous scope and depth of the human psycho-spiritual matrix," and "to become completely absorbed in the state of *nirbīja samādhi*," a holistic and life affirming state of existence.

Next, we have a set of articles from different religious traditions. James Narithookkil, a Catholic priest, an acclaimed teacher, and an expert in Islamic Studies, holds that "Islam provides a harmonious balance in the life of human beings by putting together the worldly life and spiritual life side by side." Taking the antagonism experienced by the religion of Islam into account, the author makes "a clarion call to the scholars and religious leaders of Islam to join hands to embark upon a noble venture of reviving the spiritual and moral values of Islam and, thus, to substantiate the fact that Islam is a culture of life and not death." Addressing the contrast in the life vision of Buddhism and Daoism, Maja Milčinski proposes to explain the phenomenon of death in her article "Transcending Death." Her contention that our approach towards life-death dynamics and our capacity to integrate them are important, leads Milčinski to establish that "it is enlightened self-interest that enables us to achieve the unity with our inner and outer environment and between mind and body." Allen S. Maller, an ordained Rabbi from the US, optimistically analysing the text of Torah, holds that "hope and positive outlook" are Jewish religious duties. According to him,

these pertinent values are at the back of "major [Jewish] movements in Europe and America to improve the state of society and advance human improvement." Yet another article from an African context, by John Ubrurhe, analyses the traditional healthcare practices of Urhobo traditional medicine. After critically deliberating upon the immensely rich practices of African traditional medicine, the author holds that "in order to meet the medical needs and aspirations of the people, the medical system must have a touch of science and technology." He opines that improvements are essential in the traditional medical practices so as to equip them to effectively contribute "towards the maintenance, preservation, and enhancement of human life."

In my essay, "Kant on Inclinations: 'Alien' or 'Human'?" I make a philosophical analysis on Immanuel Kant's transcendental ethics, especially critiquing the status accorded to human inclinations and desires within his moral system. Contending that the disproportionate importance given to reason and will in the critical philosophy sabotages the integrity of human beings, the author calls for an integral outlook within which both the rational and the emotional aspects could be conjoined together without losing the validity of his philosophical conclusions. In fact, this conclusion is arrived at by basing on Kant's own understanding that "*each part of a person is integrally bound up with the whole*."

In all, the contributors of this number of the *Journal of Dharma* convincingly establish the need to evolving, supporting and enhancing a culture of life in the human society. The specific role of religions and states in this process is an obvious fact. However, the initiative and insistence should primarily ensue from individual human beings, who have to consciously design and carry out a life that is capable of respecting, supporting and ennobling the life of oneself and others with a view to further strengthen the foundations of human life, culture, and values.

In fact, it is our conviction that human life cannot be lived, and a culture of life cannot be affirmed, promoted, and enhanced in the absence of mutual love and a passionate commitment: a love that is continuously expressed and mutually experienced between persons, and a firm, personal commitment that ensues from a trusting and self-giving person-to-person communion which, I am sure, would last forever as the spring and cradle of a culture of life.

Saju Chackalackal
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TOWARDS SELF-GIVING LOVE

A Biblical Model of Seven-Stage Development of Inter-Personal Dynamics

Paul Savio Pudussery♦

1. INTRODUCTION

Man[1] was thought of primarily as an *individual*[2] existing as a separate and distinct entity with rights of his own, "an island in a sea of islands." However, there is a growing awareness that man is not only an individual with his inalienability and essential separateness, but he is also a *person*[3]

♦**Prof. (Emeritus) Dr. Paul Savio Pudussery** cmi, a renowned biblical scholar and a widely acclaimed teacher, is presently teaching New Testament at Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram, Bangalore, and many other centres of theological studies throughout India.

[1]Throughout the article the term "man" is used in the sense of human being without intending any gender discrimination.

[2]From the Lain word, *individuus*, meaning 'indivisible'. "An individual is a being distinct from every other being and undivided in itself," L. M. Corvez, "Individuality," in Thomas Carson and Joann Cerrito, eds., *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Second edition, vol. 7, Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2003, 422.

[3]The term "person" is derived from the Latin word *persona* which originally means "a mask used by an actor," or "the character played by an actor." In its philosophical sense, a person is "an undivided whole existing independently and not interchangeable with any other," Max Müller and Alois Halder, "Person," in Karl Rahner, Juan Alfaro *et alii*, eds. *Sacramentum Mundi: An Encyclopedia of Theology*, vol. 4, Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, reprint, 1989, 404. In the light of the Existentialist philosophy, man is "a being-in-the-world" and he is to be seen in the "totality of his being" and "the relationship to the other and society arises from the very essential nature of man. Man knows himself from the start as open to the world and in communication with his fellow-men," Joseph Möller, "Man" under "Person," in *Sacramentum Mundi*, 411. A person is one who stands in relation to the other. In this sense, a person is actually realized only in relationships: to himself, to the world around him, and to God. Kurian Kachappilly, *God of Love. A Neoclassical Inquiry*, Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 2002, 68-69. In this sense, "no man is an island."

capable of participating in the consciousness of the other and thus entering into relations with the other. It is our 'body dimension' that pins us down to our own individuality, whereas it is our 'spirit-dimension' that makes us interpersonal.[4] It is by the power of the spirit that we are able to transcend the limitations of our individuality. Each one has to accept his own identity, but at the same time each should be able to transcend his limitations by his openness to the other. Man is a social being. His existence is essentially an existence with, and for, the other. He cannot live without relating himself with the other. According to Johann Adam Möhler, one of the great German Catholic theologians of the 19th century, "the most vital core of a man does not consist in the solitary affirmation of his individual autonomy, but in availability, welcome, receptivity."[5] What distinguishes man from other created beings is his ability to know himself and enter into relationship with other persons. "Man's humanity essentially consists in this ability to open out to people and welcome them into his life... What makes a man a person is his entering into relationships with other persons."[6] The Trinity is a model for human relationships. Trinity is a community of Persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, eternally existing in a dialogue of love, and communicating to humanity. The Christian God is not a monistic God. Christian monotheism implies a communion, a community in Godhead. That is to say, the inner life of triune God is a *communion*, *relation*, and *movement*. The whole creation is fundamentally a 'communication' – the outpouring of the Trinitarian *communion*.[7] God is a mystery of personal

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[4]The distinction between 'individual' and 'person' does not mean "there are two kinds of man, but two poles of humanity. No man is pure person and no man pure individuality," Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, ET, Second Edition, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958, 65. Each human being lives in the tension between the poles of individuality and personhood, Kachappilly, *God of Love*, 70, note 39.

[5]Quoted from John Dalrymple, *The Christian Affirmation*, London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1971, 25.

[6]Dalrymple, *The Christian Affirmation*, 26. The text continues: "Psychologists of all schools are agreed that the realization of a man's personality comes about by relating well and healthily to other men and not by remaining solitary."

[7]Antony Kalliath, "*Communication Theology: Inter-Cultural or Inculturational?*" in Joseph Palakeel, ed. *Towards A Communication Theology*, Bangalore: Asian Trading Corporation, 2003, 96

communication; open, not shut; inviting, not repelling, including, not excluding; giving, not taking; in a word, loving without any limit.[8]

Man as a person is called to a twofold relationship: vertical and horizontal, namely, relationship with God and with his fellow beings. First of all, he wants to establish authentic relationship with God. But he cannot establish authentic relationship with God unless he strives to grow in healthy relationship with his fellow beings. Jesus has illustrated this important truth very well in his Sermon on the Mount. In Matt 5:23-24 we read, "When you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift."[9] God is more interested in the way people live with others, in the way they treat each other, than in the sacrifices they might offer him; worship can never take the place of love.[10] Worship can be an expression of our good relationship with God, only if it is also an expression of our good relationship with our neighbour. Our success or failure in life depends, to a large extent, on how we relate with the other.

If one goes through the Bible, from the Book of Genesis to the Book of Revelation, one could trace a seven-stage evolution in biblical thinking on the question of interpersonal relationship which begins with the most primitive form of unlimited revenge and develops in a positive direction climaxing in the supreme expression of self-sacrificing love. The first three stages are found in the Old Testament Books and the last four stages are found in the New Testament Books. The seven stages that are seen in the Bible will be of great help to anyone who wants to develop a sound value system in his life. One has to avoid the negative examples that are portrayed in the Bible, while the positive ones will have to be acquired and made one's own.

2. STAGE ONE: UNLIMITED REVENGE

The first stage of interpersonal relationship that we find in the Bible is the

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[8]Dalrymple, *The Christian Affirmation*, 39.

[9]Unless otherwise stated, all quotations are taken from the New Revised Standard Version.

[10]John Kurichianil, *Before Thee Face to Face: A Study on Prayer in the Bible*, Middlegreen (UK): St. Paul's, 1993, 120.

violent and uncivilized form of Unlimited Revenge recorded in Gen 4:23-24 where we have a "boasting song" of Lamech. "Lamech said to his wives: 'Adah and Zilla, hear my voice; you wives of Lamech, listen to what I say: I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for striking me. If Cain is avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy-sevenfold.'" The song captures the violent spirit of Lamech. Lamech proclaims his complete independence from God by taking vengeance with his own hands. Lamech was not satisfied with the protection promised to Cain, his ancestor father (Gen 4:15). Lamech thought that if God promised "sevenfold" vengeance on anyone who kills Cain, he would give "seventy-sevenfold" on anyone attacking him. Thus, Lamech wanted to assert himself taking the law in his own hands. This "boasting song" is to be understood in the context of Gen 4:17-22 where we find a cultural evolution, namely, settlement of cities (v. 17), agriculture (v. 20), the arts of music (v. 21), and metallurgy (v. 22). This shows that the development of civilization is inherent in the growth of human race created by God. However, this flourishing of civilization also conceals the danger of an exaggerated sense of power (vv. 23-24).[11] In other words, the increased progress activated by human potential increases the possibility of mutual destruction and with the growth of one's capacities, there is a growth of self-assertion which demands retribution without limit even for the smallest injury.[12]

Lamech's attitude towards his enemy was that of unlimited revenge which finds its complete reversal in Jesus' response to Peter's question about forgiveness in Matt 18:21-22. The question of Peter and his own answer, "Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often should I forgive him? As many as seven times?" (18:21, RSV), already goes beyond the limits permitted by the Rabbis. In Tosephta, Joma 5.13, we read: "If a man sins once, twice, or three times, they forgive him; if he sins a fourth time, they do not forgive him."[13] When Peter suggested "seven times" as the limit, he would have thought that he had given a very generous offer, which could merit the approval and applause of his Master. The unexpected answer of Jesus was, however, a great surprise to Peter, an answer that removes all

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[11]Claus Westermann, *Genesis: A Practical Commentary*, ET, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1987, 36.

[12]Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1-11: A Commentary*, ET, Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1984, 337.

[13]Cited in Francis Wright Beare, *The Gospel according to Matthew: A commentary*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1981, 381.

limits, "Not seven times, but I tell you, seventy-seven times" (Matt 18:22).[14] The reply of Jesus could mean: Just as in those old days there was no limit to hatred and vengeance, so among his followers there is to be no limit to mercy and forgiveness.[15] Rejecting the unlimited revenge of Lamech, Jesus calls for unlimited forgiveness. This means that there is no question of keeping count: the spirit of forgiveness should be unlimited.

3. STAGE TWO: LIMITED REVENGE

The second stage is that of the limited revenge known as *lex talionis* (= the Law of Retaliation)[16] which is given as a part of Mosaic Law in Lev 24:19-20 (see also Ex 21:23-25; Deut 19:21). "*Eye for eye, tooth for tooth*" was a standard ancient Near Eastern law which is also found in the famous Code of Hammurabi.[17] According to this law, the punishment should be

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[14]The corresponding Greek term for "seventy-seven" is also translated by some as "seventy times seven (= 490, so RSV, GNB, and NEB). What is being emphasized by Jesus is that one should forgive without counting (whether it is 77 or 490). The quality of Christian forgiveness requires that it should not be conceived in quantitative terms; see W. D. Davis and Dale C. Allison eds., *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Matthew*, vol. 2, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1991, 793. In God's kingdom unlimited forgiveness is to take the place of retaliation.

[15]T. W. Manson, *The Sayings of Jesus*, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1957, 212.

[16]Some call this principle as *Ius Talionis* and translate it as the "Law of Equal Retribution." This principle belongs to the most ancient stock of legal rules in Western culture. The original purpose of the *talio* principle was to limit revenge. Justice was no longer obtained by revenge but by proportionate punishment given to the offender. See Hans Dieter Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, ET, Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995, 275-76. The acceptance of this rule or principle represented one of the most important steps in the development of human civilization. Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 512.

[17]Hammurabi was the king of ancient Babylon who ruled it from 1795 to 1750 BCE. He was the earliest known lawgiver who became famous for his Code of Laws, arranged in orderly and thematic collections so that all people might read and know what was required of them. The code was carved upon a black stone monument, eight feet high, and clearly intended to be read by the public. The Code gives 282 laws which are followed by an Epilogue and the Code could have been promulgated about the year 1780 BCE. The Code regulates in clear and definite terms the organization of society. For example, if a man builds a house badly, and it collapses and kills the

proportionate to the offence. It is idiomatic for the principle of proportional justice. This "eye for eye" form of law provides the foundation for the whole civil law.[18] It was never meant to sanction acts of personal vengeance, instead only to assist the judges in settling civil cases.[19] Though the Law of Retaliation seems primitive and severe, it was actually a breakthrough for justice and fairness in ancient times when most nations used arbitrary methods to punish criminals. It seems that this law has not been enforced literally in the social life of Israel (see Ex 21:18-19,26-27). The only physical penalty mentioned in the law is flogging, and that too was limited to forty lashes (Deut 25:3). But Jesus, by invoking the law of love, corrected the popular misunderstanding of the law of retaliation (Matt 5:38-42).[20] In Matt 5:39-42 Jesus seems to be speaking in hyperbolic terms to teach the lesson of non-retaliation. When we are wronged, often our first reaction is to retaliate in the same measure or more. But Jesus says that we should do good to those who wrong us. As followers of Jesus we must not let our conduct be determined by the conduct of those who treat us badly.[21]

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owner, the builder is to be slain. If the owner's son was killed, then the builder's son is to be slain (see numbers 229-230). According to number 196, "If a man put out the eye of another man, his eye shall be put out" [i.e., "An eye for an eye"] and according to number 200, "If a man knock out the teeth of his equal, his teeth shall be knocked out" [i.e., "A tooth for a tooth"]. We can see here how the Hebrews might have learned their law of retaliation.

[18]Joachim Jeremias, *The Sermon on the Mount*, ET, London: The Athlone Press, 1961, 27.

[19]A society could recognize the justice of "eye for eye" while its sages warned against fighting evil with evil. For example, Plato portrays Socrates as warning against returning evil for evil since one should never do evil at all (*Crito* 49B), see Craig S. Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew*, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999, 196.

[20]Jesus does not overthrow the principle of equivalent compensation on an institutional level, but declares it illegitimate for his followers to apply it to their private disputes, see W. D. Davis and Dale C. Allison, eds. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to Matthew*, vol. 1, Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988, 542.

[21]Beare, *The Gospel according to Matthew*, 158. Far from hitting back, Jesus tells us accept – or even invite – a second blow. This is an exaggerated way of insisting that we must not return evil for evil, see Beare, *The Gospel according to Matthew*, 158. There will be occasions when protest is in order, as when Jesus himself drew attention to an illegal action at his trial (John 18:22-23). But such occasions are never for the purpose of taking revenge, see Leon Morris, *The Gospel*

Our desire should not be to keep score, but to love and forgive. This is not natural; it is certainly supernatural. Only God can give us the strength to love as he does. To many Jews of Jesus' day, these statements were offensive. Under Roman oppression, they wanted retaliation against their enemies, whom they hated. But Jesus suggested a new, radical response to injustice: instead of demanding rights give them up freely! According to Jesus, it is more important to *give* justice and mercy than to receive it.

4. STAGE THREE: THE SILVER RULE

The third stage is that of the Silver Rule which we find in Tobit 4:15a: "*What you hate, do not do to any one.*"[22] This rule is called "*silver,*" because it is formulated in the negative and because it is less precious than the positive statement in the Gospel of Matthew (7:12), which we call the "Golden Rule." The Silver Rule was widespread in the ancient world, ranging from Confucius in the East to Isocrates of Greece in the West. The thought contained in it is shared by great religious leaders of the world. In the Akkadian *Counsels of Wisdom*, dating to about 700 BCE, five hundred years before the Book of Tobit was written, we read: "Unto your opponent do no evil; ... Let not your heart be induced to do evil" (Lines 35-40).[23] Confucius, the great Chinese philosopher and founder of Confucianism, who lived between 551 and 479 BCE, taught: "What you do not want done to you, do not do to others" (*Analects* 15:23).[24] The Greek historian

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according to Matthew, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1992, 127.

[22]Some scholars, like Betz and William Barclay, call it 'the Golden Rule' in the negative form and the moral principle that we find in Matt 7:12 they call 'the Golden Rule' in the positive form. See Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 509. Betz calls the *ius talionis* as a legal principle and the "Golden Rule" as an ethical maxim, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 513. Since there is a qualitative difference between these two principles, it is better to call the principle stated in Tobit 4:15a as "Silver Rule" and that stated in Matthew 7:12 as "Golden Rule."

[23]See James B. Pritchard, ed., *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Related to the Old Testament*, Second Edition, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955, 426.

[24]Cited in Jennifer Oldstone-Moore, *Understanding Confucianism*, London: Duncan Baird Publishers, 2003, 55. The context of this saying is this: "Tzu Kung asked: 'Is there any one word that can serve as a principle for the conduct of life?' Confucius said: "Perhaps the word 'reciprocity'; Do not do to others what you would not want others to do to you." It may be that the embodiment of the principle of

Herodotus, who lived between ca. 484 and 425 BCE, mentions as the words of Maeandrius whom Polycrates had appointed as his deputy, "What I condemn in another, I will avoid myself."[25] Isocrates, the Greek orator (ca. 436-338 BCE), tells how King Nicocles advised his subordinate officials: "Whatever angers you when you suffer it at the hands of others, do not do it to others" (*Nicocles* [*Cyprians*] 61).[26] In the Letter of Aristeas, who was an officer at the court of Ptolemy Philadelphus (285-247 BCE), we find this maxim: "As you wish that no evil should befall you, but to be a partaker of all good things, so you should act on the same principle towards your subjects and offenders" (*Letter of Aristeas*, 207).[27] The Stoics had as one of their basic maxims: "What you do not wish to be done to you, do not do to anyone else."[28]

The great Rabbi Hillel (ca. 60 BCE - 20 CE), a contemporary of Jesus, said to a heathen who wanted to know the whole Torah and become a Jew: "What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbour: this is the whole Torah; while the rest is commentary thereon; go and learn it" (*T. b. Šabb.* 31a).[29] Further, *Mahabharata*, *Anushasana Parva* 113.8 says: "One should never do that to another which he considers as injurious to his own self.

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reciprocity in a single maxim was an attempt in several cultures to distil the essence of ethical teaching. See R. J. Wyatt, "Golden Rule" in Geoffrey W. Bromiley, Gen. ed., *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*, Fully Revised, vol. 2, Exeter: The Pater Noster Press, 1982, 523.

[25]*The History*, Book III, art. 142, cited in William Benton, Great Books of the Western World, vol. 6: Herodotus and Thucydes, Chicago: University of Chicago, 24th printing, 1982, 120.

[26]Cited in Eduard Schweizer, *The Good News according to Matthew*, ET, London: SPCK., 1976, 174.

[27]Cited in R. H. Charles, ed. *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English*, vol. 2: *Pseudepigrapha*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, reprint 1979, 113.

[28]Cited in William Barclay, *The Gospel of Matthew*, vol. 1, Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, Reprint, 1987, 274.

[29]Cited in Davis and Allison, *Matthew*, 687.

This, in brief, is the rule of virtue."[30] *The Silver Rule* is a general moral principle. But it is not in itself an all-sufficient guide for daily living.[31]

5. STAGE FOUR: THE GOLDEN RULE

The fourth stage is that of the Golden Rule: Jesus, the greatest Teacher of humanity, has taught us what is known as "the Golden Rule,"[32] which is preserved in Matt 7:12: "Whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them; for this is the law and the prophets" (RSV).[33] This formulation of Jesus in the positive form infinitely surpasses the negative one, because it puts no limit to one's openness to do good to others and Jesus terms it the essence of the Law and the Prophets. It is not so hard to refrain from harming others; but it is much more difficult to take the initiative in doing something good for them. Instead of having the others' actions determine our reaction, we should take the initiative and act toward them in love and kindness.[34] A person could satisfy the "Silver Rule" by simple inaction.

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[30]Cited in *Mahābhārata*, translated into English from original Sanskrit Text, by M. N. Dutt, vol. VII, Delhi: Parimal Publications, 1994, 250.

[31]There is a common acknowledgement of the social conventions concerning fairness and mutuality of favours as the Latin dictum tells us, *do ut des* ("I give so that you may give"). This is a principle of reciprocity which we universally find in the human social life. But genuine ethical action must be based on the goodness, understood as acts of generosity and philanthropy, regardless of what the other person has done or not done. See Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 512. This is what we find in the "Golden Rule" as given by Jesus in Matthew 7:12.

[32]At least since a sermon of John Wesley in 1750, Matthew 7:12 has been known as the "Golden Rule." Over a thousand year earlier, the Christian Roman Emperor Alexander Severus (who lived in the beginning of the third century) engraved the saying in Matt 7:12 in gold on the wall of his chamber. See Keener, *Matthew*, 248, note 233.

[33]In the parallel passage in Luke 6:31 we read: "Do to others as you would have them do to you." This command of Jesus in Luke seems to presuppose the kind of eagerness for *reciprocity* in moral conduct which the following verses (vv. 32-35a) go on to condemn. Hence, according to Victor Paul Furnish, *The Love Command in the New Testament*, London: SCM Press Ltd., 1973, 57-58 the "Golden Rule" in Luke is to be understood as a separate counsel illustrative of the love command and its requirements mentioned in 6:27. In the light of the criticism of the commonly practised "reciprocity ethic" made in vv. 32-35a, one's actions toward others should *not* be shaped by what he has received or can expect to receive from them.

[34]Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 517.

But "a goodness which consists in doing nothing would be a contradiction of everything that Christian goodness means... When we are told that we must actively do to others what we would have them to do to us, a new principle enters into life, and a new attitude to our fellowmen."[35] The "Golden Rule" could be seen as the practical application of Lev 19:18: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself." What a man desires for himself is usually limitless, and the requirement of doing that for others represents the most radical of summons to love one's neighbour. Matt 7:12 thus indicates that the Law and the Prophets are fulfilled in substance when we make the "Golden Rule" the guiding principle of life. In a sense, it epitomizes Jesus' teaching concerning one's duty to his neighbour.

The "Golden Rule," as Jesus formulated it, is the foundation of active goodness and mercy and it is often seen as one of the distinctive features of Jesus' ethic. But in fact the "Golden Rule" is present outside of and prior to Jesus' teaching.[36] For example, Isocrates (Nicocles 49), already in the 4th century BCE, has said: "You should be such in your dealings with others as you expect me to be in my dealings with you."[37] Again, Mencius, the great follower of Confucius, who lived in the 4th century BCE, gives a text similar to the content of the Golden Rule: "If one strives to treat others as he would be treated by them, he shall not fail to come near the perfect life."[38] In the Akkadian *Counsels of Wisdom* (7th century BCE), we can find some of the positive ideas that are implied in the "Golden Rule": "Unto your opponent do no evil; ... Give food to eat, give date wine to drink; ... Be helpful, do good."[39] According to Victor Paul Furnish, following the position of the German scholar Albrecht Dihle,[40] the "Golden Rule," in its origin, "is a bit of practical wisdom of the Greeks, from them taken over into Judaism, and

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[35]Barclay, *Matthew*, vol. 1, 275-76.

[36]Furnish, *The Love Command*, 63.

[37]Cited in Furnish, *The Love Command*, 63, note 123.

[38]Cited in G. T. Bettany, *Encylopedia of World Religions*, New York: Dorset Press, 1988, 131.

[39]See Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, 426. According to H. D. Betz, "the Golden Rule is neither non-Christian nor Christian; it is recognized as universal and is as such 'Christianized' by its insertion in the Sermon on the Mount," *The Sermon on the Mount*, 518.

[40]Albrecht Dihle, *Die goldene Regel: Eine Einführung in die Geschichte der antiken und frühchristlichen Vulgärethik*, Studienhefte zur Altertumswissenschaft, 7, Götingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962.

subsequently into Christian teaching."[41] Jesus, however, through his life and teaching, has given it a new dimension and depth of meaning. The "Golden Rule" presupposes discipleship and submission to the rule of God. Its intention is that one is to be as concerned for the other person's good as for one's own.[42] This is the law of love, the principle by which Jesus epitomizes the entire 'humanward' aspect of God's law (Matt 22:39-40), a principle Jesus' earliest followers never forgot (Rom 13:8-10; Gal 5:14; James 2:8).[43] The "Golden Rule" could, thus, be seen as "the general principle for all ethical decision making" and presupposes as its foundation "God's initiative of generosity, forbearance, and forgiveness. The disciples are to imitate this divine initiative."[44]

6. STAGE FIVE: LOVE OF NEIGHBOUR = LOVE OF GOD

The fifth stage is that in which Jesus brought the love of neighbour on the same level with the love of God. To the lawyer who asked, which commandment in the law is the greatest, Jesus said: "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbour[45] as yourself.'[46] On these two

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[41]Furnish, *The Love Command*, 63.

[42]Frank Stagg, "Matthew," in Clifton J. Allen, General Editor, *The Broadman Bible Commentary*, vol. 8, *General Articles Matthew-Mark*, London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott Ltd., 1969, 121.

[43]Keener, *Matthew*, 249.

[44]Betz, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 518.

[45]It seems that the Jews understood by the term "neighbour" one's fellow Jew ("You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against *any of your people*, but you shall love *your neighbour* as yourself," Lev 19:18). But Jesus certainly meant more than loving the person of one's own religion. Jesus extended the term as widely as possible to mean one's fellow being. See Morris, *Matthew*, 563-64. Jesus even extended the term "neighbour" to include one's own enemies; in other words, he wanted to include all people in the solidarity of love. See Albert Nolan, *Jesus before Christianity*, Quezon City: Clarentian Publications, 1976, 61. It is true that in the Old Testament we could see that the love of neighbour is extended even to the strangers who dwell in the land (see Lev 19:34; Deut 10:19).

[46]The expression, "as yourself," in both the Old and New Testaments, is not a limitation placed by the commandment, as if self-love were to be the measure of neighbourly love. The sense of the term is not that of limitation, but of removal of

commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matt 22:37-40).[47] It is striking that Jesus is asked for one commandment ("which commandment in the law is the greatest?"), but he responds with two. Matthew alone specifically adds that the second is "*like*" the first. "Like" here does not mean that it is 'similar', but that it is of 'equal importance' and inseparable from the first.[48] The great command to love God has as its inseparable counterpart the command to love the neighbour. It is significant that it is Jesus who, for the first time, combined the commandment on the love of God (Deut 6:5) with the less known command on the love of neighbour (Lev 19:18) and brought the love of neighbour to the same level as the love of God.[49] By adding Lev 19:18 to Deut 6:5 Jesus has reinterpreted Deut 6:5 to mean that it is precisely by loving one's neighbour as oneself that one truly loves God with all one's heart. If we compare Matthew's version with that

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limitation. Thus, as the care that a man lavishes on himself and his affairs knows no limits, so much the more should be the care which he bestows on others. See Karl Hermann Schelkle, *Theology of the New Testament*, vol. 3: *Morality*, ET, Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1973, 125. The man who loves himself (since he knows that he is loved by God) can love others because he has a firm base from which to do so. Only when the value of self has been taken for granted can a real relationship with the other be possible. See Dalrymple, *The Christian Affirmation*, 124-25.

[47]The rabbis had counted 613 commandments; out of these 248 are positive commands and 365 are negative commands.

[48]See Furnish, *The Love Command*, 31. In Matthew it is made clear beyond doubt that the 'second' is of the same rank as the first. See Furnish, *The Love Command*, 33.

[49]In the late first century Rabbi Akiba and other Jewish teachers conjoined love of God with love of neighbour. Philo, the Hellenist Jewish philosopher and historian who lived between ca. 20 BCE and 50 CE, headed the most essential laws under two categories of Godwardness and humanwardness. In Late Judaism love of God and love of neighbour are combined in a single commandment: "Love the Lord and your neighbour," *The Testament of Issachar*, 5:2. Similarly, in the Egyptian piety as reported by Diodorus Siculus, the Greek historian who lived in the late first century BCE, we find that the supreme offences were impiety toward gods and sin against mortals. See Keener, *Matthew*, 531 also note 227. "Yet Jesus' combination of the two as the greatest commandments, which exercised an authoritative influence on subsequent Christian formulations ... is distinctive ... Only Jesus wielded the moral authority among his followers to focus their ethics so profoundly around a single theme ... the one Teacher who united them. Thence comes the early Christian 'law of love'." Keener, *Matthew*, 531.

of Luke (10:27), the latter's description is very distinctive. In Luke, it is the lawyer who gives the answer and Jesus commends him for it. Rather than make the love of God as "the first" commandment and love of neighbour as "the second," Luke combines them into a single unified command so that *love of neighbour* has the same force as *love of God*: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself." The idea that love ought to be the governing principle in human relationships did not originate with Jesus (see Lev 19:18); in Jesus' teaching, however, the love command is given a central, determining role as the principle for *interpreting* the moral requirements of the whole law.[50]

The two love commandments belong together, covering the vertical and the horizontal dimensions: the relationship with God and the relationship with others. The first contains the second; the second presupposes and depends on the first.[51] In both cases, love is not understood merely as an emotion. Love for one's neighbour means acting toward one's own fellow beings with their good and their well being as the primary motivation and goal of all actions.[52] Such love is constant and takes no regard of the merit or demerit of the other person. Love of God, on the other hand, is to be understood as a matter of commitment and obedience. With orientation toward God and others, the law and the prophets have reached their ultimate goal.

Jesus, in his words and actions, teaches us that it is impossible to love God without loving one's neighbour. Love for people in need,

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[50]Furnish, *The Love Command*, 64-65.

[51]R. T. France, in *The Gospel according to Matthew* (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, 1), Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1985, 320, writes: "Neither is to be raised above the other; each depends on the other for its true force." Loving God and loving the neighbour are the two inseparable parts of the *total* response to the sovereign claim of God under which man stands. See Furnish, *The Love Command*, 63.

[52]The Synoptics present Jesus as the one who "commands" love and not as one who "inspires" it. Hence, the *command* to love involves one's affirmation of the other (including the enemy). To affirm the other person, even when he is my enemy, necessarily carries with it the acknowledgement that his finite existence is caught up and bound up with my own finite existence. To affirm him in the love Jesus commands means to be constructively and compassionately extended to all his needs, see Furnish, *The Love Command*, 66-67.

indeed, is not secondary to love for God. Years later, the First Letter of John would formulate this in a way that could not be misunderstood: "If any one says, 'I love God', and hates his brother, he is a liar" (1 John 4:20, RSV). Love of God, in Jesus' ministry, is interpreted by love of neighbour. In a sense, the neighbour represents God for us and loving our neighbour could be seen as the way to love God. Neighbour is, so to say, the sacrament of our encounter with God. Here it is to be remembered that love of neighbour is not a substitute for the love of God; but it draws its meaning and strength from the love of God. It is true that the Christian loves God in loving his neighbour, but he loves his neighbour because he loves God. Both love are interrelated and go together. It is significant to note that St. Paul, later, goes to such an extent that he reduces these two commandments into one: namely, the love of neighbour. In Rom 13:9-10 he writes: "The commandments ... are summed up in this word, 'Love your neighbour as yourself'. Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law" (see also Gal 5:13-14).

7. STAGE SIX: LOVE OF ENEMIES

The sixth stage is that of love of enemies given in Matt 5:44. The sixth antithesis in the Sermon on the Mount begins thus: "You have heard that it was said, 'you shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy'. But I say to you, Love your enemies[53] and pray for those who persecute you" (Matt 5:43-44). The commandment "You shall love your neighbour" is found in Lev 19:18. It is not followed by any charge to "hate your enemy." This clause is not part of the citation but may be taken from the sense in which the love of neighbour was commonly understood. There are some passages in the Old Testament, which at least seem to encourage hatred of enemies. The invading Israelites are charged not only to dispossess the nations of Canaan, but also to exterminate them: "When the Lord your God gives them over to you and you defeat them, then you must utterly destroy them. Make

[53]Certainly, the commandment of love of enemy is anticipated and rooted in Judaism. The Wisdom tradition teaches: "If your enemies are hungry, give them bread to eat; and if they are thirsty, give them water to drink" (Proverbs 25:21; see also Proverbs 19:11). This text shows that even in the OT we find the demand for the concrete, loving service to the enemy in need. But it is with Jesus love of enemy has become an ethical demand that claims universal validity beyond religious and national boundaries. See George Strecker, *The Sermon on the Mount: An Exegetical Commentary*, ET, Edinburg: T. & T. Clark, 1988, 177.

no covenant with them and show them no mercy" (Deut 7:2). A Psalmist will even say, thinking that God will commend him: "Do I not hate those who hate you, O Lord? ... I hate them with perfect hatred; I count them my enemies" (Ps 139:21-22). A midrashic comment (*Sifra* on Lev 19:18) interprets the command to 'love your neighbour' as meaning, "You shall not take vengeance or cherish anger against the sons of your people, but you may take vengeance and cherish anger against others."[54] In the time of Jesus, the community of Qumran, situated on the northwest of Dead Sea, still makes it a duty on its members "to love all the sons of light ... and ... hate all the sons of darkness" (1 QS 1.9-10).[55] Since there is no commandment to hate one's enemy in the Old Testament, and since hatred of enemies is expressly demanded in the Qumran community, it is possible that "Jesus may have formulated his command about love of enemy in reference to Qumran."[56]

Love of enemies is an invitation to moral heroism and sanctity.[57] This stage is a loftier one. The love that is demanded by Jesus is not one of sentiment and emotion, but of concrete action. Its meaning is found in the Lucan parallel (Lk 6:27-28, 35) where "love" is defined as "do good to," i.e., practical concern for another's well-being. In Luke we read: "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you" (Lk 6:27-28; see also Lk 6:35). In other words, love is to be expressed in acts, commitments, and deeds (1 John 3:18).

St. Paul, in his Letter to the Romans, gives us a beautiful exhortation, which is certainly influenced by Jesus' teaching. In Rom 12, he writes: "Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all" (12:9-

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[54]Cited in Beare, *The Gospel according to Matthew*, 161.

[55]Cited in G. Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 2nd edition, Harmondsworth (England): Penguin Books, 1975, 72.

[56]Schelkle, *Theology of the New Testament*, 126.

[57]Loving those who love us is no virtue. Jesus here is appealing for an experience of solidarity with humankind, an experience that is non-exclusive and not dependent upon reciprocity. See Nolan, *Jesus before Christianity*, 61. "The commandment of love of enemy is of such unambiguous precision and radicality that it has plainly become the epitome of Christian teaching." Strecker, The *Sermon on the Mount*, 177.

10,14,17). The closing verses of this chapter are very important. Paul describes how we should deal with our enemies in a very positive way: "Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord'. No, 'if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads'.[58] Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (12:19-21).

The motive for Jesus' disciples to love their enemies is the desire "to be" (Greek: "to become") the children of the heavenly Father who himself acts in this way (Matt 5:45; see also Lk 6:35). The actions of God's loving concern are not calculated according to the merits or demerits of the recipients; he bestows his love on all irrespective of their worthiness or unworthiness. God breaks through the law of retribution and practises the law of unconditional love. Those who respond to this God and practise the same unconditional love are "sons of God" (see 1 John 4:7; 2:29).

Jesus' invitation to his disciples, "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt 5:48), is a call to the completeness of love, a love that is not measured and limited by the character of those with whom we have to relate. Hence, the word "perfect" (Greek: *teleios*) is not used here in the sense of moral perfection ("flawless moral character"), but in line with its corresponding Hebrew word *tamîm*, meaning to be "wholehearted" or "undivided" in one's love and devotion.[59] When we say that God is "perfect," we have to understand it as God is undivided in bestowing his love and concern to all; that he does not make a distinction between good and bad; that he loves all totally and unconditionally. Hence, the radical call, "*Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect*," means that we should wholeheartedly and unconditionally extend our love and goodness to our

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[58]The statement that "the person who feeds his hungry enemy and gives drink to his thirsty enemy heaps coals of fire on his head," seems to point to an Egyptian penitential ritual involving a real change of mind. The enemy, receiving the unexpected goodness, will be humiliated and this will lead him to repentance. See Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, ET, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980, 349.

[59]The *New English Bible* translates Deut 18:13: "You shall be wholehearted [Septuagint: *teleios*] in your service of the Lord your God."

neighbours, as God is undivided in showering his love and goodness on all.[60] The parallel passage in Luke brings out this meaning well: "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful" (Lk 6:36).

8. STAGE SEVEN: THE SUPREME EXPRESSION OF LOVE

The seventh and the last stage is the supreme expression of love, a love that spends itself to the extent of sacrificing one's life for the other. It is to this highest form of love that Jesus refers when he says in John 15:12-13: "This is my commandment, that you love one another *as I have loved you.* No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends." Here we have the highest and noblest form of love. Before we interpret this passage let us go to another Johannine text which qualifies the commandment of love as "new": "I give you a *new* commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another" (John 13:34).[61] John 13:34 is the only text in the Fourth Gospel where the commandment of love is qualified as "*new.*"[62] The Greek word used for "new" is *kainos*, which means "*qualitatively new.*"[63] The Johannine Jesus is giving his disciples "a new commandment" and the newness is to be found in the qualification, "*as I have loved you.*" The essential newness of the Johannine understanding of love is its Christological reference: that we should love one another *as Jesus loved us.* The expression, "*as* I have loved you," emphasizes two things: (1) Jesus is primarily *the source* of Christians' love for another, and (2) Jesus is *the model* or standard of

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[60]The *New English Bible* translation of this verse (5:48) brings out its meaning very well: "There must be no limit to your goodness, as your heavenly Father's goodness knows no bounds." The six antitheses which we find in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:21-48) illustrate well this basic attitude of love.

[61]Since the disciples cannot follow Jesus as he leaves this world, they receive the commandment of love (13:34-35), the observance of which will keep the spirit of Jesus alive among them.

[62]Love itself is not a new commandment, but an old one; it was part of the Mosaic Law (Lev 19:18). But the manner and extent to which we should love our neighbour is new; we must love our neighbour *as Christ has loved us.* By his teaching and still more by his example Jesus imparted a new depth of meaning to it. F. F. Bruce, *The Gospel of John*, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983, 294.

[63]There is another Greek word *neos* used for "new" and this means "*chronologically new.*"

Christian love.[64] Firstly, Jesus is the *source* of the disciples' love for one another. The love that Jesus has for his followers is not only affective but also effective; it brings about their salvation.[65] Even Jesus' love has its ultimate source in the love of the Father: "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you" (John 15:9). Secondly, Jesus loved us by giving his life for us, by sacrificing his life for us. The divine love is absolutely *selfless*, *self-sacrificing* (15:12-13) and *self-giving* (3:16). This self-giving and self-sacrificing love of Jesus should be the *model* for the disciples to imitate. Jesus' love is an "example" (see 13:15) of all subsequent Christian love. The Christian love should possess these characteristics of love. Such self-giving and self-sacrificing love must be the distinguishing mark of Jesus' disciples (13:35).

Here we have to face an allegation that the "love of one another," of which the Johannine Jesus speaks, is love *between Christians*.[66] Further, nothing is said about loving "the neighbour" or "enemy." Hence, it is not Christian love in its fullest and finest form.[67] In the Qumran community, too, great emphasis had been given to fraternal love among its members (see 1 QS 1.9-11). But there is a difference: while for the Qumran community "love is a duty consequent upon one's belonging to the community, for John, Jesus' love for men is constitutive of the community."[68] The love command in John is given to a community which needs to find its own identity and maintain its own integrity in the midst of

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[64]Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel according to John XIII-XXI* (The Anchor Bible, 29A), New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1970, 612. The newness of the commandment of love consists in the fact that it has as its source, model and motive Jesus' self-sacrificing love for his disciples. Antony Edanad, *Christian Existence and the New Covenant*, Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 1987, 226.

[65]Brown, *The Gospel according to John XIII-XXI*, 612.

[66]The "one another" is correctly defined in 1 John 3:14 as 'our brothers and sisters' ("We know that we have passed from death to life because *we love one another*"), that is, those within the Christian community. Brown, *The Gospel according to John XIII-XXI*, 613. According to Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, ET. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971, 528, the command of love seems to undergo a limitation through the expression, "*one another.*" "It is no general love of mankind, or love of one's neighbour or enemy that is demanded, but love within the circle of disciples."

[67]Furnish, *The Love Command*, 146.

[68]Brown, *The Gospel according to John XIII-XXI*, 613.

a hostile world. John regards God's love and the Son's mission of love to be extended to all who receive him; indeed, the Son's mission of love is conceived of as a mission to the whole world (see John 3:16; 4:42; 8:12). Hence, we must acknowledge that the commandment to "love one another" need not be regarded as excluding love for "neighbours" and "enemies."[69] For the Evangelist John, "love is the completely universal characteristic of the children of God."[70] The selfless love of Christians for each other will distinguish them from among others (see John 13:35), and draw the world to them and, thus, to Jesus.[71] As long as the followers of Jesus live out their authentic Christian love in the world, one could very well say that the world is encountering Jesus.[72]

The disciples in the Gospel of John are spoken of as loving Jesus (14:15, 21, 23, 28), but never God (in contrast to 1 John 4:20-21; 5:2; Matt 22:37) and they are commanded to love one another (John 13:34; 15:12, 17).[73] In the Johannine tradition the two commandments of the love of God and love of neighbour are fused into one: love of neighbour (see also Gal 5:14; Rom 13:8-10); the two commandments are joined, one within the other, and are inseparable.[74] The only sign that the Christian is in communion with the Son and the Father is that he loves his brethren (see 1 John 3:14; 4:20). Love and union with the Father flows into love and union with the brethren. "The love relationship of John's Gospel should not be understood as belonging primarily to the area of affection or feeling or emotion but rather to a deeper kind of communion, of interpersonal relationship, concern and communication. Its emotional side is joy, the joy of the salvation of Jesus (14:28; 15:11)."[75]

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[69]Furnish, *The Love Command*, 148.

[70]Rudolf Schnackenburg, *The Moral Teaching of the New Testament*, ET. New York: The Seabury Press, 1965, 328.

[71]Michael J. Taylor, *John: The Different Gospel*, New York: Alba House, 1983, 165.

[72]Brown, *The Gospel according to John XIII-XXI*, 614.

[73]J. N. Sanders, edited and completed by B. A. Mastin, *A Commentary on the Gospel according to St John*, London: Adam & Charles Black, 1968, 129.

[74]Séan P. Kealy, *That You May Believe: The Gospel according to John*, Slough (UK), 1978, 123.

[75]Kealy, *That You May Believe*, 123.

In John 15:12-14, Jesus states the *quality* of his love. The greatest love is shown by one who lays down his life for friends. This is the supreme proof of love. In the Johannine context this must refer primarily to the love of Jesus shown on the Cross. There he laid down his life on behalf of us all. Jesus gave everything, even his own life, for others. There is no greater proof of love than this. Jesus' own love is given as the basis and the model for the disciples' love for each other. If 15:12-14 speaks of the *quality* of Jesus' love, 15:15-16 speaks of a new relationship between Jesus and his disciples. It is Jesus who has taken the initiative in drawing the disciples into a new relationship. In this new relationship the disciples are no longer "servants," but "*friends*," intimate and equal associates of Jesus who loves them without limit (see 13:1, "*to the end*")[76] and who lays down his life in love. They, in turn, must accept the commandment of Jesus, namely, they must love one another (see 13:35; 15:12,17). Jesus is not asking them to do anything more than he himself has done. Christ's sacrificial love is the ground and measure of their love towards their neighbour. St. Augustine's saying, "Love, and do what you will," is a clear expression of what Jesus is teaching here. If we love, in the sense in which Jesus uses the term, we need no other rule.

The Johannine Jesus gives radicality and a new depth of meaning to the commandment of love that is already given in Deut 6:5 and Lev 19:18. In Jesus' teaching, love is not just *commended* as a noble way of life; it is actually *commanded* as the rule of the Kingdom. Love is, indeed, the law of life in the Kingdom. Love is, in fact, the power and the purpose of God's coming and reign. It is the duty of every human being to be bound first to God in love. To be bound to God is to be bound in a love which cares for others and serves them. *Service* is the watchword of this *love ethic* and the visible expression of the love Jesus commands.[77] The greatest expression of love is the sacrifice of one's own life for the other. But it is not necessary that we die for someone in a literal sense, but there are indeed other ways of

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[76]John 13:1: Jesus loved "*his own to the end.*" The phrase "*to the end*" has a twofold meaning: (1) "*perfectly*" and (2) "*to the end of life*," that is, to the death. First, Jesus loved "*his own*" in a way that surpasses all imaginable loving and, secondly, Jesus loved them until the end of his life. Thus, the expression, "*to the end*," indicates the quality of Jesus' love, a love which is without limit, without measure. He loved them to such an extent that he accepted to die for them (see also 10:11,15,17).

[77]Furnish, *The Love Command*, 68-69.

practising sacrificial love: listening, helping, encouraging, and giving our time and talents for the good of the other. A Christian culture of life should promote in our interpersonal relationships the great ideals that are set forth in the Bible.

9. CONCLUSION

Love, self-giving and self-sacrificing love, is the supreme expression of our interpersonal relationship and, hence, it is the highest stage in our relationship with our neighbour. *A loving person* is always *a good person* and a good person is always *a self-giving person.* He gives himself to others, by spending his time and energy for the good of the other. The one who loves is the one who does good to the other. That is what we read in Luke 6:27: "Love your enemies, *do good to* those who hate you." Again, the one who loves is the one who gives himself to others (see John 3:16). In Acts 20:17-35, Paul summons all the elders of the Church of Ephesus at the port city of Miletus and there he makes a very emotionally charged farewell speech. He knew very well, like his Master, Jesus Christ, that he would be going to Jerusalem and that he would be arrested there. In the speech he reminds his audience how faithfully he preached Jesus Christ to them and how he worked hard with his own hands to support himself and his companions and, thus, gave them an example that by such work they must support the weak remembering the words of Jesus who said: "It is more blessed *to give* than to receive" (Acts 20:35).[78]

Love, *goodness*, and *self-giving* are essentially related to each other. It is the nature of goodness to give itself. As a Scholastic axiom puts it, "*Bonum est diffusivum sui,*" i.e., it is the nature of goodness to diffuse itself, to spend itself, to give itself. *Good* is said to communicate its goodness. Since God is infinite goodness, he only knows to give; he never receives anything from his created world. But it is the nature of creatures to receive from others. The child knows only to receive; but as he grows up, he slowly

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[78]This is one of the *agrapha* (= "unwritten"), that is, one of the sayings of Jesus unrecorded in the canonical Gospels but found in other parts of the New Testament or in early Christian writings. Although this saying is not found in the Gospels, its spirit is seen in Luke 6:38. See also Sirach 4:31, "Do not let your hand be stretched out to receive and closed when it is time to give;" and *Didachē* 1.5, "Blessed is he who gives according to the mandate." See F. F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles*, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 8th printing, 1975, 383.

learns the beautiful lesson of giving to others. Hence, the art of giving is the art of a mature person. When we begin to give ourselves to others we share in the very character of God. As the famous spiritual writer Faber has said, "when we give, we resemble the Creator; when we receive, we resemble the creature." The sign of real love is giving, giving oneself to the other. This giving we find in its ideal form in a mother. The love of a mother is, so to say, boundless and un-calculating. The mother loves her child not calculating how much she will receive from it in return. Even if the child is suffering from a terminal disease, the parents will spend all their resources to treat the child. This is pure love, self-less love, un-calculating love. This is what we find in God in its sublime and un-surpassing form. God, in Jesus Christ, has given us the model of self-giving *par excellence*. It is this selfless giving, generous giving, that is emphasized by Jesus in John 15:13: "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends." Thus, as we go through the Bible, from the Book of Genesis to the Gospel of John, we see how humanity is asked to move away from the most primitive form of unlimited revenge to the highest ideal of self-sacrificing love as it is revealed in the life of Jesus, the Greatest Master of humanity, and how this supreme expression of love is to be lived out in the lives of his followers.

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LIFE AND LAW
Canon Law and Its Life Enhancing Dimensions

Cherian Thunduparampil♦

1. Introduction

Jesus Christ had initiated a charismatic community, which finally evolved into the Church. It is not, however, a spiritual and heavenly reality alone. It has got a visible human face and an organizational structure. It is not a stagnant but a dynamic one, comprising of independent and free human beings. This independence is, however, not absolute, nor a license to do anything without limit or regard for fellow human beings. Just as different parts or organs of a human being are endowed with different duties, and as they function according to an ordered structure for the organic growth, different individuals and juridical institutions in the Church community also have certain specific tasks to fulfil, which are aimed at the good of the individuals as well as the society. These individuals and juridical institutions must have sufficient freedom and ambience conducive to discharge the tasks they are assigned with.

Without a good order this will not be possible. In this article we try to see how laws can be of assistance in providing this necessary atmosphere. A good ruler or legislator will find rules and regulations as a special means of facilitating the social as well as individual life in bringing about common good through the establishment of good order. In our search after the life enhancing dimension of the Canon Law we shall analyse some of the guiding principles accepted in the revision process of the Latin and the Eastern Codes[1] as our point of departure. First of all, we shall briefly discuss the life-giving dimension of law in the Bible.

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[1]*Codex Iuris Canonici*, Auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. II promulgatus, AAS 75 (1983), Pars II, 1-317 (For the English version used in this article, see The Canon Law Society of Great Britain and Ireland, *The Code of Canon Law*, Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 1983). *Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium*, Auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. II promulgatus, AAS 82 (1990), 1033-1353 (For the English version see, Canon Law Society of America, *Code of Canons of the Eastern*

2. Jesus and the Life-giving Dimension of Law

Jesus says: "I came that they may have life and have it abundantly" (Jn. 10:10). This is no legal prescription but the soul of the gospel message. Jesus, through various parables and episodes, reaffirms the fact that the function of law is to impart, ensure, and foster life, and not to hinder or destroy it. Law is life centred both in its social and individual dimensions and in the spiritual and material aspects.

In Mt. 12:1-14 we read Jesus' confrontation with the Pharisees with regard to the Law of Sabbath. When Jesus and the disciples were passing through the grain field, the hungry disciples plucked grain and ate. It was, according to the Pharisees, against the law of Sabbath and, therefore, they questioned Jesus: "Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath" (v.3). It is interesting to note that the Pharisees were not complaining against an act of theft or encroachment into others' property or wealth, but pointing to the non-observance of a law. Jesus, with reference to the Old Testament and David who "entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for priests" (v.4), told them: "I desire mercy and not sacrifice" (v.7). Then, he cured the man with withered hand. As Jesus healed the man, Pharisees accused him of doing unlawful things on Sabbath. Mark and Luke insert here a question addressed by Jesus to the accusing Pharisees: "I ask you, is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to destroy it?" (Mk. 3:4; Lk. 6:9). Jesus himself answers it telling them that "... it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath" (v.12). Then, he by healing the sick man established that the law should aim at giving or enhancing life and eliminating or, at least, diminishing human suffering respecting the dignity of human being who is created in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:26). "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath; the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath" (Mk. 2:28).

Jesus points out that literal observance of law neglecting its spirit is detrimental to life; in other words, an exclusive insistence upon the literal sense of the law is far from being life enhancing. Another example to show Jesus' attitude towards Pharisaic legalism would be parable of the woman caught in adultery (Jn. 8:1-11). The Pharisees and Scribes brought a woman caught in adultery and wanted to stone her to death, according to the law of Moses. Now Jesus does not pronounce a judgment either in

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Churches, Latin English Edition, New Translation, Washington, DC, 2001).

favour or against her. But somehow brings out the fact that law is not to destroy a life but to save and redeem even the fallen ones. He said: "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her." If he were to grant permission to follow the law of Moses to the literal sense, then that would have caused her spiritual as well as physical death. Thus, Jesus revealed to them the fact that the purpose of law is not to cause death to a person, neither physical nor spiritual but to enhance both. Jesus was not defying the law of Moses but perfecting it by applying that which we now call the "principle of equity," that is meting out justice with the sweetness of mercy. "Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them" (Mt. 5:17).

St. Paul also in many of his letters attacked Jewish legalists who placed observance of the law before the practice of religion in spirit: "A person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ" (Gal. 2:16). At the same time, however, he acknowledged a clear role for law: to assist the local churches he had visited to live lives in harmony with the message of Jesus. Thus, "law functions best when it upholds and fosters the dignity of the individual and assures through its directives respect for the dignity of each person."[2] Ultimately, therefore, the Bible and the message of Jesus constitute the main source of Canon Law.

3. The Idea of Two Codes

The very idea of having two codes in the Catholic Church – one for the Latin Church and another for the 21 Oriental Churches – points to the life-enhancing dimension of laws in the Church. Referring to the importance of the two codes in the life of the Universal Church, that is, Eastern and Western, Pope John Paul II declared: "The Church gathered by the one Spirit breaths, as it were, with the two lungs of East and West, and burns with the love of Christ, having one heart, as it were, with two ventricles."[3] Separate codes for the West and the East enable the Latin Church and the 21 Eastern Churches to be free from the clutches of unnecessary centralization in government and to live the rich identity and patrimony of each Church in its fullness.

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[2]Kevin E. McKenna: *A Concise Guide to Canon Law*, Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 1999, 13.

[3]John Paul II, Ap. Const. *Sacri Canones*, in Canon Law Society of America, *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches*, Latin English Edition, New Translation, xxiii-xxiv.

The committees constituted for the revision of both the codes were given 10 guidelines each to be followed in the revision process.[4] The first guideline of the Eastern Code stipulated that all the oriental churches must have a single code equally applicable to all of them. There is sufficient reason for unity among the various oriental churches which prompts the codification of a single code for all of them. There is, however, provision for the formulation of particular laws, and this is praiseworthy. It helps to accommodate the divergences and differences that arose in the course of the historical, cultural and socio-political development of each church into the body of laws. Thus, the provision for particular laws takes care of the life of the 21 individual churches *sui iuris* and their salient features which are unique to each one of them. It facilitates to better guide and shape the life of each individual church. We know for certain that for the growth, development, and expansion of any society or organization, a certain amount of freedom and independence is inevitable. The Church by providing two codes shows its openness to other traditions and cultures, the development and safeguarding of which contribute to the beauty and organic growth of the whole. It is, indeed, the thrust of the Vatican document on the Eastern Churches (OE).

4. Principle of Subsidiarity

Another factor which discloses the positive thinking and life enhancing dimension of the new codes is the principle of subsidiarity, one of the guidelines for the revision. It means the higher authorities do not reserve that which the lower bodies or units can perform on their own. It, thus, recognizes the competence and efficiency of the subordinates. Certain things could be best executed or implemented when they are left to the lower bodies. Thus, this principle also helps indirectly to strengthen "the bond between those exercising authority and those subject to authority."[5] While maintaining the general and universal laws that are applicable to the entire church, the principle of subsidiarity prescribes that "greater weight should be given to particular legislation, even at the national and regional levels, so that the unique characteristics of individual churches will

[4] *Communicationes* 1 (1969), 77-85: The principles for the revision of the Latin Code were approved by the Synod of Bishops of 1967; *Nuntia* 3 (1976), 10, 14-24: The guidelines for the Revision of the Oriental Code were approved at the first Plenary Assembly of the Commission of the March 18-23, 1974.

[5] James A. Coriden, ed., *The Code of Canon Law: A Text and Commentary*, Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 1995, 6.

become apparent."[6] According to this principle, the lower or subordinate bodies or authorities are empowered to enact rules to be observed within their jurisdictions. A higher ecclesiastical authority grants to a lower one increased autonomy in executive as well as legislative powers. It is in view of better catering to the needs of the churches *sui iuris*. The Oriental Churches have adhered to the principle of subsidiarity all through the ages. It leaves "to the competent authorities of these churches the power to regulate by particular law all other matters not reserved to the holy see." Similarly, the individual bishops should not reserve to themselves what the parish priests and others under him could perform. The parish priests, in turn, should leave to those under them the competence and power to perform those which they can.[7]

CCEO c.1493 §2 stipulates what a particular law is: "Under the name particular law come all laws ... which are neither common to the entire church nor to all the Eastern Churches." Ivan Žužek holds that the concept of this principle "covers every type of *ius particulare*, ranging from the law of the eparchy to that of an individual religious community or of an association or to the legitimate internal rules of a seminary, a faculty of higher studies and so on."[8]

As a result of the application of this principle we see that several canons, especially in the Oriental Code, will have a provision for the individual churches to make particular laws on particular points. For example, CCEO c.1013 §1 stipulates that "the eparchial bishop has the right within the limits established by particular law of his own church *sui iuris*, to determine the fees for the various acts of the power of governance and to determine the offerings on the occasion of the Divine Liturgy, sacraments..." Several things that the previous Oriental and Latin Codes reserved to the Holy See either for legislation or for execution have now been left to the diocesan bishops or Synod of Bishops to decide upon. This enriches the life of various individual church communities because these lower authorities can better make laws taking into account the special needs and circumstances of particular communities.

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[6]Coriden, ed., *The Code of Canon Law A Text and Commentary*, 6.

[7]*Nuntia* 3 (1976), 20-21.

[8]Ivan Žužek, "Particular Law in the Code of Canons of the Eastern churches," in Jose Chiramel et al., eds., *The Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches: A Study and Interpretation*, Alwaye, India: STAR Publications, 1992, 44.

5. Material and Spiritual Welfare

While speaking about the lay people employed in the service of the Church, the code states: "They have the right to a just remuneration suited to their condition by which they can, with due regard for the prescripts of civil law, provide decently for their own needs and those of their family. They likewise have the right for suitable insurance, social security and health care to be provided for themselves and their family" (CCEO c.409 §2; see also CIC c.213 §2). The codes have also legislated about the need of establishing an institute whereby the clerics could be suitably provided with necessary material support. "Insofar as necessary, each eparchy is to establish, in a manner determined by the particular law of its own Church *sui iuris*, a common fund through which eparchial bishops can satisfy obligations towards other persons who serve the Church and meet the various needs of the eparchy and through which the richer eparchies can also assist the poorer ones" (CCEO c.1021 §3; see also CIC c.1274). CIC c.281 §3 and CCEO c.390 speak about the material security of permanent deacons and the married clergy, respectively. The remuneration they receive should be adequate to support themselves and their family members. "The immediate purpose of the Decalogue was the security in life, marriage, property and good name of the men of the community."[9]

Luke 10:29-37 deals with the parable of the Good Samaritan. The introductory discourse is initiated with a preamble on law (vv.25-28). An expert in law asks Jesus: "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" The response of Jesus also has a reference to law: "What is written in the law? What do you read there?" The lawyer, quoting from the book of Dt. 6:5, says: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might." So, spiritual perfection is sought in the observance of law. Codes establish that the lay faithful have the legitimate right to seek spiritual nurturing from the pastors (CCEO c.16; CIC c.213). Moreover, the last canon of CIC stipulates that salvation of souls is the supreme law in the Church (c.1752). We can say, therefore, that the laws in the Church aim at the material as well as spiritual welfare of the faithful.

6. Freedom Enhanced by Law and Order

There is a common misconception that rules and regulations in the Church are means of repression, which curtail one's freedom and, thus, make life of the faithful a miserable one. In the hands of a tyrant or a dictator laws

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[9]George Nedungatt, Unpublished class notes on *Law in OT*, 8.

may become instruments of oppression. So also in the hands of a 'legalist' the rules and regulations might loose their spirit and people would be suffocated under the *heaviness* of laws. With "such selfish authorities who consider their subjects as slaves or as their possessions law puts on an inhuman face and becomes an instrument of oppression rather than of salvation and liberation."[10] The Canon Law Society of America, through the following concrete example, discloses the fact that it is not an "instrument of repression" rather of creating freedom that ensures maximum common good. It is not a means of restricting freedom, though apparently it might seem to be such for those who do not grasp the significance of law and consider law as absolute license to do anything.

> In most modern cities, it will take at least an hour to reach the airport by car. If there were no traffic regulations of any kind, it were a "free for all," it would almost certainly take twice or more that length of time to get there. The point about any traffic regulations is that they are designed to provide the greatest degree of freedom possible for everyone, consistent with the maximum degree of safety that is practically achievable. It is taken for granted that each road user has an equal right to the same freedom. It is the same with all good law. Its purpose is the positive one of creating the circumstances in which true freedom is possible and true human goals attainable. The opposite of law is not freedom, but chaos, which has been well described as "a much more restrictive tyranny."[11]

The definition of law, which will be discussed in the sequel, tells us that laws are enacted for the common good. According to Vatican II, common good is "the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfilment more fully and more easily" (GS 26). In this sense the traffic rules only facilitate the best use of the road transportation serving the common good by protecting everybody's freedom.

Since there is fundamental equality among all the faithful by virtue of baptism irrespective of any hierarchy of order or status of life, and since

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[10]Jose Porunnedom, "Laws: Medicinal or Punitive? Canons on Penal Sanctions in the Code of Canon Law (CIC) and Code of Canons of the Oriental Churches (CCEO)," *Jeevadhara* 32, 190 (2002), 263-64.

[11]Canon Law Society of Great Britain and Ireland, "The New Code of Canon Law: An Invitation and a Challenge," *Readings, Cases, Materials in Canon Law A Text book for Ministerial Students*, ed. Jorden Hite, Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1990, 103.

there is functional diversity among the faithful, one of the guiding principles of both the codes prescribes to clearly define the rights and duties of all the faithful. CCEO c.17 and CIC c.214 speak of the right of the faithful to follow their own form of spiritual life in accordance with the norms of the Church. Thus, the code protects the fundamental rights of the faithful to freedom. However, it is not an absolute license to do anything and everything according to one's whims and fancies. It restricts the exercise of this freedom lest it would adversely affect the common good of the Church. The codes of canon law strike a balance between freedom, duty, and obligation that together enhance the integral life and organic growth of the community. Thus, canon 21 of CCEO makes the right to inquiry and expression constitutional: "Those who are engaged in the sacred sciences have a just freedom of inquiry and of expressing their opinion prudently on matters in which they possess expertise, while observing the submission due to the magisterium of the church." The revision committee was of the opinion that the code should provide sufficient liberty of action to the faithful and should recognize and safeguard their rights:

> The code must also protect the right of lay people to information and to the expression of personal opinions, provided this is done in accordance with the principles laid down in LG 37: "They [i.e., lay people] are, by reason of the knowledge, competence or outstanding ability which they may enjoy, permitted and sometimes even obliged to express their opinion on those things which concern the good of the church."[12]

7. Purpose and Function of Laws in the Church

In order to arrive at the point of our discussion, i.e., the life enhancing orientation of canon law, it is better to see the purpose of law in any society and in the church, in particular, which is a spiritual as well as visible, earthly as well as a heavenly reality composed of weak, imperfect human beings. If we look back to the history of the ecclesial society as well as the civil society, we can note that the reasons behind the emergence of most of the complex rules, regulations and other restrictive measures that govern the society are the anomalies or chaotic circumstances that arose in the society in the course of human history. Whenever such things happened they needed to be controlled, checked and

[12] *Nuntia* 10 (1976), 23.

set aright so that there emerged an atmosphere conducive to the life and smooth functioning of the society as well as the individuals. Therefore, the persons who are having the care of the community enact certain laws that would restore and ensure the tranquillity and peace in a given society. Thus, laws help to create an order which, in turn, facilitate the smooth functioning of society and provide security in life.

For example, recently in the wake of the September 11, 2001 attack on the World Trade Centre in the USA, almost all nations, especially the developed countries, have established very strict and stringent security measures for the screening of the passengers and their flights. One may think that it has made life very miserable and that it curtails one's freedom to travel anywhere freely. But, in fact, such restrictions are introduced to ensure and protect the lives of hundreds and thousands who travel by flights.

There was the protestant argument that Church is a spiritual and invisible reality and, therefore, there is no need or relevance for laws in the Church. But the Catholic position sees Church as a visible and invisible reality and affirms the role of law as a facilitator. It is against this background that Pope John Paul II, promulgating the Latin Code, stated: "The purpose of the Code is not to substitute for faith, grace, charisms, and especially charity in the life of the Church or of the Christian faithful. On the contrary, its very purpose is to create an order in the ecclesial society so that, while giving priority to love, grace and charism, their ordered development is facilitated in the life of the ecclesial society as well as in the lives of the individuals who belong to it."[13] He continued to speak of the necessity of laws thus: "Since the Church is established in the form of a social and visible unit, it needs rules, so that ... the mutual relationships of Christ's faithful are reconciled in justice based on charity, with the rights of each safeguarded and defined; and ... that the common initiatives which are undertaken so that Christian life may be ever more perfectly carried out, are supported, strengthened and promoted by canonical laws."

As the traffic rules protect and safeguard the rights of every user of the road transportation and at the same time avoids confusion and chaos which might endanger the lives of many in accidents, canon law helps the society as well as the individual members to live a harmonious life where everyone can enjoy the fruits of love, grace, charity and such values. One of the guiding principles given to the revision committees of both the

[13]John Paul II, Ap. Const. *Sacri Disciplinae leges.*

codes was to define the rights and obligations of each individual and to prescribe ways and means to protect them. In short, the scope of the norms and regulations is to enhance the life both at the individual and societal levels. This is also evident from the definition of law in general and that of canon law in particular.

Law is "rule made by authority for the proper regulation of a community or society or for correct conduct in life."[14] As man is a social being, there need to be some kind of order so that the societal life functions in a harmonious way. There should be someone or some legal body who is competent to guide and govern every society. The general definition of law cited above contains the element of authority. It also spells out the purpose of law, i.e., to properly regulate the life in the society or to properly direct the behaviour of the members of a society.

Thomas Aquinas' classical definition on canon law runs as follows: "Law is an ordinance of reason for the common good, made by that person who has care for the community, and promulgated."[15] This definition of canon law contains the following elements: It is a set of norms created by reason; it intends to bring order into the life of the ecclesial community; it is articulated and promulgated by those who are entrusted with the care of the community and its purpose is to serve the common good. An officially promulgated Code of Canon Law imposes obligations, that is, it establishes legal bonds from which rights and duties flow. Legislator or authority is not one who suppresses his subjects with the load of rules. Rather, he is one who has care for the community and, therefore, prescribes certain ways and means which would enhance the good of the individual as well as the society as the mother cares for the child and controls him with her prescriptions aiming at his well being.

8. Laws Serve Common Good

Vatican document on Church in the Modern World describes what common good is. It is "the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfilment more fully and more easily" (GS 26). The same document says that human

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[14] *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, Third Edition (1974), s.v. *Law*.

[15] St. Thomas Acquins, *Sum. Theol.* I -II q. 90, a. 4: *Leges quae nihil est aliud quam quaedam rationis ordinatio ad bonum comune, ab eo qui curam comunitatis habet promulgata.*

person is having "sublime dignity" and that "his rights and duties are universal and inviolable." Respect for the person as such is one of the elements presupposed by common good. Similarly, it also requires the social well-being and development of the group itself as it concerns the life of all. "The Social order and its development must constantly yield to the good of the person, since the order of things must be subordinate to the order of persons and not the other way round as the Lord suggested when he said that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath" (GS 26). Charles Rice holds that "in the name of the common good, public authorities are bound to respect the fundamental and inalienable rights of the human person. Society should permit each of its members to fulfil his vocation."[16]

Thus, authority and rules are not instruments that oppress or suppress the subjects; instead their duty is to serve them and "... make accessible to each what is needed to lead a truly human life: food, clothing, health, work, education and culture, suitable information, the right to establish a family, and so on."[17] The theological and ecclesiological vision of Vatican II has been translated into legal texts in the Codes of Canon Law. These laws function as a special means for the better guiding and shaping of the life of the individuals as well as the society having always in mind the common good. CCEO c.15 §3 and CIC c.212 §3 remind the Christian faithful of their right and duty to take account of the common good. CCEO c.26 §1 reads: "In exercising their rights, the Christian faithful, both as individuals and gathered in associations, must take account of the common good of the Church, as well as the rights of others and their own duties to others." Thus, we see that the common good and the exercise of the rights and duties of the individuals are interrelated. Therefore, the second paragraph of the same canon prescribes that "Ecclesiastical authority has the competence to regulate, in view of the common good, the exercise of the rights which are proper to the Christian faithful."[18]

Various important functions that canonical rules fulfill in the church community illustrate the life enhancing dimension of canon law. According to James A. Coriden, law has at least four functions in any

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[16]Charles Rice "*50 Questions on the Natural Law*," San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1999, 72.

[17]*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n. 1908.

[18]See also CIC c. 223.

society. In the Church community canon law fulfills these functions.[19] First of all, law is to *aid* a society in the achievement of its *goals*. Laws in the church facilitate the members of the church to be what it ought to be. Moreover, in the church, which is a community distinct from civil society, "the salvation of souls is the supreme law" (CIC c.1752). Secondly, by providing "good order, reliable procedures and predictable outcomes" laws effect stability in the society. "The church needs the tranquility of order in its life... The community of faith has a right to expect reasonable, appropriate and predictable ways of doing these everyday things. The canons govern these functions, which are vital as well as stabilizing." *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* also teaches the same: "... The common good requires peace, that is, the stability and security of a just order. It presupposes that authority should ensure by morally acceptable means the security of society and its members. It is the basis of the right to legitimate personal and collective defense."[20] Thirdly, "law is to *protect personal rights*, provide avenues of recourse and redress of grievances, and means for the resolution of conflicts."[21] Church is a community of relationships. Hence, there must be a juridic order, involving rights and obligations. For the smooth functioning of the community, all its members should accept and recognize each other and their rights and obligations with justice and fairness. It is the function of Canon Law, therefore, "to articulate the rights and duties of the faithful, and to provide means for their protection." Finally, "law is *to assist in the education of the community* by reminding everyone of its values and standards. Canon law spells out the expectations of members, the qualifications for office-holders, and the ideals of religious life. The church's discipline is concerned to lead people to a virtuous life, not simply an external compliance with rules..."[22] Thus, by creating an order in the church community, its laws enhance the life of the individuals as well as that of the society.

9. Law, Justice and Mercy

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the promulgation of the Code of Canon Law of the Oriental Churches (CCEO), a symposium was

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[19]James A. Coriden, *An Introduction to Canon Law*, New York: Paulist Press, 1991, 5-6.
[20]*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n. 1909.
[21]Coriden, *An Introduction to Canon Law*, 5-6.
[22]Coriden, *An Introduction to Canon Law*, 5-6.

organized in Rome.[23] It was entitled "*Ius Ecclesiarum-Vehiculum Caritatis*." In his inaugural address to the participants, the Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches, Ignace Moussa I Daoud said that if the Oriental Catholic Churches remained throughout their history a vehicle of connection (*collegamento*) and bond between the Bishop of Rome and the Oriental Churches not in full communion with Rome, it is also true that this vehicle had the vocation of being a *Vehicle of Charity*.[24] With reference to the collection and codification of the norms which unified various juridical traditions of the ancient Churches bearing witness to the apostolic tradition, he said that these norms cannot but be addressed as the "*Vehicle of charity.*" After having enumerated 1751 canonical prescriptions, the last canon declares that "salvation of souls is the supreme law" in the Church (CIC c.1752). Indeed, the body of laws in the church is a vehicle of charity that ultimately aims at the salvation of all. Charity includes love, kindness, mercy, etc., which together enhance the life of the deserving persons.

Both codes of canon law have taken due effort to ventilate the pastoral thrust of Pope John XXIII and that of the Vatican Council II (*Christus Domus*). Consequently, one of the guiding principles for the revision of both codes was the pastoral concern. "Pastoral care is to be fostered above all, and to that end both the legislation and its application are to be characterized by charity, moderation, humanity and equity as well as justice. Exhortation and persuasion are to be preferred to an insistence of rights."[25] It means that the pastors should be given due discretionary powers in dealing with particular situations and individuals. Pastoral care must be the hallmark of the code. A spirit of charity, temperance, humaneness and moderation should mark laws. For example, CCEO c.209 §3 speaks of the pastoral charity that a pastor should extend to the sick and poor. Further, CCEO c.503 §2, c.553, and c.562 §3

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[23]Simposio "*Ius Ecclesarum-Vehiculum Caritatis*," occasione del decennale dell'entrata in vigore del *Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium* (Città del vaticano, 19-23 novembre 2001).

[24]Ignace Moussa I Daoud, "Prolusione al Simposio: '*Ius Ecclesiarum: Vehiculum Caritatis*,'" occasione del decennale dell'entrata in vigore del *Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium*, Citta del Vaticano, 19-23 novembre 2001, 2: "*E se le Chiese Orientale Cattoliche sono state per tutta la loro storia veicolo di collegamento e legame fra il Vescovo di Roma e la Cristianità orientale non in piena comunione con Roma, e anche vero che questo veicolo aveva vocazione di essere veicolo di carità.*"

[25]The text is taken from Coridan, *An Introduction to Canon Law*, 36.

prescribe that a religious institute should preserve equitable and evangelical charity toward a member who is being separated from it. The director of novices should be a person outstanding in charity (CCEO c.420 §2; CIC c.628 §3). Canons 8, 620, and 1047 §1 recognize the right of the Christian faithful to found associations and movements and pious associations in order to serve charitable purposes.

In the official report of the proceedings of the revision committee of the Oriental Code we see the following criterion:

> Special care must be taken in the drawing up of laws so that the new code reflect a concern not only for justice but also for that wise equity which is the fruit of understanding and charity: indeed the code must be such as to encourage pastors to practise these virtues with discretion and intelligence. The canonical norms, therefore, should not impose obligations when instructions, exhortations, suggestions and similar acts by which communion among the faithful is fostered [*sic*], are sufficient for the better attainment of the church's purpose... Bishops and others entrusted with the care of souls must be allowed reasonable discretional power, enabling them to establish guidelines for the faithful and suit these to individual cases. Thus, the good of the church as a whole would seem to require that the norms of the future code be not over-rigid. The concession of a somewhat greater liberty to bishops will manifest yet more clearly the pastoral character of the code.[26]

Laws in the Church have always to deal with justice. Pastoral concern, however, requires that "... norms to be observed in the strict sense will not be imposed unless for the common good and general ecclesiastical discipline,"[27] as the application of law in the strictest sense would sometimes forfeit the spirit of the teachings of the supreme law giver, Jesus Christ who prefers mercy to sacrifice, and life of man to observance of the Sabbath.

10. Penal Sanctions in CCEO

The pastoral concerns and the charitable aspect of the Church laws are more explicit in the section dealing with penal sanctions in the Church. Since Church is a community of imperfect and erring human beings,

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[26]*Nuntia* 3 (1976), 20-21.

[27]Canon Law Society of America, *Code of Canons of the Eastern churches* Latin English Edition, Kottayam (1990), xxxi.

penalties are sometimes necessary; moreover, a human being is a mixture of good and evil and is prone to evil or, at least, to deviate from what is good. Therefore, to motivate him and sometimes to prompt and bind him to do good and to respect the right of others Church also resorts to some sanctions as a last resort. The ninth Guiding Principle for the revision of the Latin code states that ecclesiastical penalties should be kept to a minimum and their remission limited to the external forum. In general, most penalties should be *ferendae sententiae*, i.e., requiring an authoritative decision for imposition. Automatic penalties (*latae sententiae*) should be reduced to the smallest possible number and restricted to the most serious of matters.[28] While the guidelines for the revision of CIC contained the prescription to reduce the number of *latae sententiae* to the minimum, in the case of CCEO it was a total abolition or elimination of the same.

> In the Oriental Code all the "*poenae latae sententiae*" should be abolished, because they do not correspond to the genuine oriental tradition, are unknown to Orthodox Churches, and do not seem necessary for the purpose of the [adaptation] of the Oriental Code to the present day requirements of the discipline of the Oriental Catholic Churches. Greater weight must be given to the '*monitio canonica*' before proceeding to inflict a penalty, according to the ancient oriental canons.[29]

The pastoral concern reflected in the codes and the medicinal character of the ecclesiastical sanctions in the church, which exhorts to apply the principle of equity, are the two important factors which indicate the life enhancing dimension of Canon Law. CCEO c.1401 stipulates:

> Since God employs every means to bring back the erring sheep, those who have received from Him the power to loose and to bind are to apply suitable medicine to the sickness of those who have committed delicts, reproving, imploring and rebuking them with the greatest patience and teaching. Indeed, they are even to impose penalties in order to heal the wounds caused by the delict, so that those who commit delicts are not driven to the depth of despair nor

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[28]Com. 2 (1969) 84-85; text is from Coriden, ed., *The Code of Canon Law*, 7.

[29]*Nuntia* 3 (1976), 24. See also Victor J. Pospishil, *Eastern Catholic Church Law*, Revised and Augmented Edition, New York: At. Maron Publications, 1996, 71.

are restraints relaxed unto a dissoluteness of life and contempt of the law.

In the formulation of the canons on penal sanction, the commission has followed the general directives of Vatican II to refer back to the tradition and ancient sources of eastern churches and to take into consideration the mind of the Council. The first canon in this section is a theological introduction to the whole portion. Nicea (325) c.12 and the Trullan Council's (690-91) c.102 are considered as the source for the present canon "as it is particularly important to comprehend the spirit of penal sanctions in the church." These canons speak about the role of spiritual director and confessor as minister of divine justice and mercy. They are cited as sources because "in penal matters as well, an ecclesiastical judge is a minister of divine justice and mercy."[30] These ancient canons are based on the biblical mandate to bind and loose (Mt. 16:19; 18:15-18). It is an indication that "the power of establishing and applying some penal sanctions in the Church springs from its very divine institution."[31] Jesus empowered the church authorities to inflict punishment for grave sins or offences. Ecclesiastical penalties are aimed at searching after and bringing back the lost sheep (Mt. 18:12-14; Lk. 15:4-7). The code encourages to trying all the means possible such as exhortation, persuasion, etc., to bring back the wounded persons and then only as a last resort to impose penalties. Every delict is a communal as well as individual offence. This canon, therefore, spells out clearly what the most important aim of punishments in the church is: to enhance life. It also indicates the way to be followed in imposing punishments on delicts.[32]

There are two ways of imposing punishment according to CCEO cc. 1468-1486: by following a penal trial and by an extra-judicial decree of the competent authority. The second mode does not involve a formal process and, hence, it is in this sense simpler. "However, because of its diminished formality it could become a cause for injustice toward the offender. This is the reason why the canons expressly exclude the use of extra-judicial decree if it could result in a deprivation of office, title, insignia or suspension from official duties for more than one year, demotion to a

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[30]Dimitri Salachas, "The 'Sacred Canons' on Administration of Justice Received or Adapted in the Eastern Code," trans. Paul Pallath, *Eastern Legal Thought* 2 (2003), 21.

[31]Salachas, "The 'Sacred Canons' on Administration of Justice," 21.

[32]Carl G. Fürst, "Penal Sanctions in the Church, cc. 1201-1467," *A Guide to the Eastern Code*, ed. George Nedungatt, 780.

lower grade, deposition or major excommunication, when only a formal trial will do (c.1402).[33] According to c.1401, penal sanction in the Church is having medicinal character and it is applied with a view to healing the wound caused by the crime. Porunnedom speaks about the curative and preventive aspects of penal sanction in the Church and stresses the importance of bringing about fresh life in the delict. "As medication is not to be used to kill people but to give them life, penal laws are to give fresh life to those to whom they are applied."[34]

> The offender is seen as a spiritually sick person and the crime as a spiritual illness. Therefore, the minister of ecclesiastical justice is considered as a spiritual doctor who must examine the gravity of the illness, that is the gravity of the offence and the disposition of the offender for conversion, and only then he is to order the appropriate spiritual remedy. In the fear that by exaggeration in the one or other direction, the spiritual health of the sick is not obtained at all, but only the worsening of the illness and the wound.[35]

CCEO c.1486 §1 stipulates that for the validity of decree by which a penalty is imposed, it is required that "the accused be notified of the accusation as well as the proofs and be given the opportunity of fully exercising the right of self-defence, unless the accused neglected to appear after being cited in accord with the norm of law." The canon takes into consideration the delict and the person is given opportunity to defend oneself. C.1404 §1 prescribes that in the matter of penalties, the more benign interpretation is to be made. It is to be noted that it is not a concession coming from the good will and good nature of the superior, but it is the legitimate right given to the offender by the law.[36] The medicinal penalties (censures, i.e., excommunication, interdict, and suspension) of which CIC c.1312 §1n.1 speaks are "designed to bring about the correction of an offender's behaviour and his or her reintegration into the full life of the church community."[37]

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[33]Pospishil, *Eastern Catholic Church Law*, 748-751.

[34]Porunnedom, "Laws: Medicinal or Punitive?" 269.

[35]Salachas, "The 'Sacred Canons' on Administration of Justice," 21-22.

[36]See Pospishil, *Eastern Catholic Church Law*, 748, 751.

[37]The Canon Law Society of Great Britain and Ireland, *The Canon Law Letter and Spirit*, Goeffrey Chapman (1999), 750.

11. Conclusion

The laws in the Church are based on the teachings of Jesus Christ and the gospel message, as any other ecclesiastical discipline is. Jesus has not come to abolish law but to fulfil it. Laws and even sacrifices have relevance and significance only if they are life cantered and life oriented. Therefore, Jesus has perfected the laws by stressing the spirit and neglecting the mere literal and external observance of them. Likewise, the aim of laws in the Church is the material as well as spiritual welfare of the faithful. By promulgating two codes for the one Catholic Church the legislator expresses his ardent desire and will to do justice to the Latin and the Eastern Church communities and to the individuals who belong to them. It helps to protect and safeguard the freedom, rich patrimony and identity of the individual Churches. This, in turn, helps to better cater to the material as well as spiritual life and needs of the individual faithful.

Several guidelines like the principle of subsidiarity, provision for particular laws, principle of equity, which were given to the Revision Committees of both the Codes of Canon Law, indicate the life-enhancing dimension of Canon Law. Laws function as a special instrument that creates order in the Church community where all recognize and accept mutually the rights of others to facilitate the life and smooth functioning of the community. Penal laws in the Church, especially in the Oriental Code, constitute an important section that explicitly tells about the life-enhancing dimension of laws.

Laws have always to do with justice in any society. As the Church is a community distinct from the civil society in its origin, history, inner dynamism, and goals, the laws of the Church have got their own characteristic features. Penal sanctions in the Church are designed to impart justice but with the sweetness of mercy. Where the strictest application of law might cause spiritual as well as physical death of the individuals, as it could be found in the case of the adulterous woman in the Bible, the Church encourages applying law as a medicine to heal the wound and to give fresh life. Justice is here superseded with charity and mercy intending to enhance life in its totality.

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HAṬHAYOGA SĀDHANA AND THE PARADOX OF SELF-CULTIVATION

Ellen Goldberg♦

1. Introduction

It moves – yet it does not move!
It's far away – yet near at hand!
It is within this whole world – yet
It's also outside this whole world.
Īśā Upaniṣad[1]

Since I have looked in some detail at the process of *haṭhayoga* in two recent studies (2001, 2002), my interest here is motivated primarily by an apparent paradox that I see positioned at the very heart of the *sādhana* or self-cultivation process itself. As Kalamaras says, "the meditative traditions of India have always relied upon paradox as a central method of exploration, as well as a means of describing an experience of 'higher consciousness' itself."[2] More specifically, I am concerned with paradox as it permeates the actual practice (*sādhana*) of *haṭhayoga*, rather than with the idea of paradox as a heuristic or centralizing feature of *yoga* philosophy. Although we do see a number of parallels with other Eastern meditative traditions, most notably Zen *kōans*, the *haṭhayoga* material presents a level of embodied discourse that is not found to the same degree in other traditions and, for this reason, it presents a unique case study.

Other than practice, one way to learn about the expedient path[3] of

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[1]*Īśā Upaniṣad* 1:5, cited in Patrick Olivelle, *The Early Upaniṣads: Annotated Text and Translation*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988, 407.

[2]George Kalamaras, *Reclaiming the Tacit Dimension: Symbolic Form in the Rhetoric of Silence*, Albany: State University of New York, 1994, 7

[3]For example, throughout his study of Sahajiyā, Hugh B. Urban refers to the human

haṭhayoga sādhana is through the textual or scriptural material available.[4] This, alongside the oral (i.e., living, interpretive and commentarial) tradition, presents the most comprehensive approach. For this reason, the reader should not be surprised to find that I refer not only to the teachings on practice deriving from the *haṭhayoga* textual tradition, but also to the oral and written commentaries received from the monastic lineage of Swami Kṛpālvananda,[5] a recognized master (*ācārya*, *guru*) in this tradition.

In his writings, Kṛpālvananda draws not only upon his own experiences, but also on a rich oral and written legacy of Indian spirituality. The texts that are most authoritative for his lineage and his teachings are the various works on *yoga*, in particular the *Haṭhayoga Pradīpikā* of Svātmarāma (HYP). His own commentary on this text (HYPR),[6] subtitled *Rahasyabodhini* (*The Secrets of Knowledge*), was written as a manual specifically to help clarify and illuminate the path of renunciation (*nivṛtti mārga*) of *prāṇa yogasādhana* or *prāṇopāsana* for his initiated disciples (through *śaktipāta*[7] and *sannyāsadīkṣā*), and it offers

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body as the central and most "expedient" path of liberation (*Songs of Ecstasy: Tantric and Devotional Songs from Colonial Bengal*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002, 34-35, 64).

[4]The heritage of *yoga* scriptures in India is vast. However, medieval *haṭhayoga* or *kriyā yoga* scriptures, such as the *Haṭhayogapradīpikā* (HYP), *Gheraṇḍa Samhita* (GS), *Śiva Samhita* (SS), *Gorakṣa Samhita* (GS), *Haṭharatnāvali* (HR), etc., represent a genre of aphoristic, Sanskrit literature that concentrates mainly on a regimen of corporeal practices that facilitate a programmatic path leading to the highest state of *samādhi* and *sāmarasya* (union of Śiva and Śakti). The technical term '*haṭha*' was first used by Gorakṣa of the Nāthayogi *sampradāya* in the *Haṭhadīpikā* (HD). Svātmarāma (also known as Ātmarāma) makes reference to this in his HYP. See Venkata M. Reddy, *Haṭharatnāvalī of Srinivasabhatta Mahayogindra* (Sanskrit and English), Arthamuru: Ramakrishna Reddy, 1982 for more details on two unpublished manuscripts of the HD in Darbar Library, Nepal, and Government Manuscript Library Bhubaneswar, Orissa.

[5]For the hagiographic details of the life of Swami Kṛpālvānanda see Ellen Goldberg, "The *Haṭhayoga Pradīpikā* of Svātmarāma and the *Rahasyabodhini* of Kṛpālvānanda," *Journal of Indian Philosophy and Religion* 6, 10 (2001), 1-37.

[6]*Haṭhayoga Pradīpikā* (Sanskrit and Hindi text and commentary by Swami Kṛpālvānanda), Swami Vinit Muni and Ellen Goldberg, trans. (Unpublished Manuscript), 1995.

[7]For an interesting article on śaktipāta, see Paul E. Muller-Ortega, "On the Seal of Śambhu: A Poem by Abhinavagupta," in *Tantra in Practice*, ed. David Gordon White, pages 573-587, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000. I would argue, however, that

empirical testimony of the living reality of *yoga* in contemporary India. Quite often the teachings of the textual tradition are intentionally ambiguous, and this is especially the case in the area of practice. Indeed, *haṭhayoga* sources are not always self-explanatory. Consequently, direct transmission and commentary by a competent teacher or *guru* is considered more authoritative than even the printed word or written manuscript among recognized adepts (HYP 3:79, 4:8-9; SS 3:11; HR 2:68, 75; HYPR 2:4-6). Alongside the textual sources, the recorded and oral traditions of interpretation and explanation offer a necessary contribution to our scholarly endeavours.

2. *Haṭhayoga* Tradition

There is a fundamental belief inherent in the *haṭhayoga* tradition that by performing the practices prescribed a more expedient and direct way to liberation is attainable. The intensive *haṭhayoga* practices that navigate the practitioner through the intricacies of self-cultivation are rooted in a cultural understanding of the universe as ordered and governed by discernable causal laws and patterns. Furthermore, these laws are homologous with the individual's own attempts to harness, refine and, subsequently, sublimate the energy (*prāṇa-śakti*) that emanates within the entire universe through the means of ritual identification or *sādhana* (GS 7:2; 7: 12-13; HYP 4: 77).

Broadly stated, the *haṭhayoga* tradition embraces a how-to or self-help approach, teaching experiential, first-hand techniques for systematically developing, enhancing and perfecting the *yogin/ī*'s spiritual awareness. Meaning and clarification are found in the actual performative response to the ascetic and meditative practices and are clearly oriented toward individual mystical accomplishment. The emphasis in this tradition is on cultivating a thorough and coherent program of practical techniques that depends upon a corresponding, culturally constructed, cosmological system emphasizing an internalized, psychic landscape that works according to its own internal logic. The practice of techniques, such as *āsana*, *satkarma*, *prāṇāyāma*, *pratyāhāra*, *mudrā*, *mantra*, *nādānusandhāna*, *dhāranā*, and *dhyāna*, guide or navigate the practitioner systematically through the constitution of the individual human body and the psyche to a direct experience of reality conceived in terms of its own particular cultural orientation as Śiva-Śakti, a primordial unity that includes within itself

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Swami Muktānanda is not the "only" teacher who bestowed *śaktipāta*.

the conjoined masculine and feminine principles (GS 1:10-11; GS 3:41-42; 7:12-13; also referred to as *bindu-rājas* HYP3:101). Thus, in this profoundly embodied practice in which the entire body/mind is looked upon as an essential vehicle for the realization of *Śivatva* (or Śivahood), we see the linking together of the social, the philosophical, the metaphysical, and the scientific or practical teachings which essentially work in tandem to occlude physical and mental obscurities, reduce and impede disease by prolonging or extending life, and illuminate and refine the instrument of the mind (*buddhi*) for insight in the higher stages of meditation (HYP 2:16, 20, 47; 3:3, 7; 30, 75; GS 3: 63, 76; 5: 77; HR 2:1, 10, 116).

3. Ultimate Goal of *Haṭhayoga*: *Nirbīja Samādhi*

Essentially, *haṭhayoga* offers a practical regimen of disciplines for developing and training the individual's direct spiritual recognition of the self (*ātman*), that is to say, the cultivation of one's original, natural, and spontaneous state (*sahaja*, HYP 4:11). It also is a tradition devoted primarily to meditation and the necessary ascetic preparations for the attainment of *samādhi*. As such, it is neither known for its particular contributions to Indian systematic philosophy, nor as a distinctly intellectual tradition.[8] This, in my view, probably accounts for the obvious lack of scholarly attention given to this particular school, for our own ethnocentrism, at least in the Western academic field of religious studies, tends at times to elevate the philosophical and textual traditions over and above the experiential techniques associated explicitly with the culture of the body (*kriyā* or *kāya sādhana*).[9]

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[8]A. K. Banerjea, *Philosophy of Goraknāth*. Groakpur: Gorakpur University, 1961, xix.

[9]For example, Turner refers to a "theoretical prudery with respect to human corporeality which constitutes an analytical gap at the core of sociological enquiry" (Brian Turner, *The Body and Society*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984, 30). It can be argued that this Hellenized-Christian "prudery," or, at least, latent historical strands of it, situated alongside the traditional, Cartesian dichotomy between desire (body) and reason (mind), inform our Western notions of the human body. Moreover, notions of the human body as "a limiting point of human experience and consciousness" as well as the theological symbolism of Christian "sinfulness" express ideas deeply sedimented in Western intellectual history. Turner sees Foucault's writings as a response to Western social sciences' "negligence" and "neglect" (34, 227) of the body as an attempt to recover it as a site of human discourse and knowledge. I would argue that while these specific assumptions are not present in the Indian

However, we see even in the classical tradition of Patañjali's *rājayoga* (*Yogasūtras* [YS] 2: 28-55[10]), and in the orthodox compositions of Vedānta (e.g., *Praśna Upaniṣad* [PU] 1:10; 3:6, *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* [SU] 2:8-5, *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* [KU] 6:16) a rudimentary outline of *kriyāyoga sādhana*, *prāṇopāsana* or *haṭhayoga sādhana*[11] that is considered not only a substantive

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haṭhayoga worldview, which is grounded in non-duality and reciprocity (not to mention paradox), it is nonetheless a system mediated by its own ideological models of biology, psychology, history, metaphysics, sociology, religion, and saturated with symbolic significance.

[10]These *sūtras* refer specifically to the extrovert practices which weaken the *kleśas* or five hindrances (*avidyā*, *asmītā*, *rāga*, *dveṣa*, and *abhiniveśa*) and, thus, bring about the cessation of *vṛtti*. Kṛpālvānanda essentially agrees with Patañjali insofar as there are two stages of *yoga*, extrovert (*bahiraṅga*, indirect) and introvert (*antaraṅga*, direct); however, he refers specifically to the *bahiraṅga* stage of *rājayoga* as *haṭha* or *kriyā yoga* since it typically addresses the restraint of the five senses. This, in turn, promotes the *antaraṅga* phase, leading to the complete restraint of the *citta* or *rājayoga* (HYPR 1:10). For Kṛpālvānanda, the word *rāja* is a metaphorical reference to the crown of the head or the location of the *sahasrāra cakra*. Both the internal and the external aspects are clearly addressed in the *haṭhayoga* manuals, just as both aspects are addressed in Patañjali. For Kṛpālvānanda, the difference is primarily one of emphasis.

[11]For example, the *Praśna Upaniṣad* tells the story of six men who journey to see the Venerable Pippalāda in search of *parabrahman* (PU 1.1). Pippalāda explains that there are two paths in the body, the southern (*dakṣiṇa*) path and the northern (*uttara*) path. The latter, which is the path of *prāṇānā* or *prāṇa* is regarded as the higher of the two since it alone delivers cessation or *nirodha* (PU 1.1-10). Similar to many texts of this type, the *Praśna Upaniṣad* discloses the extraordinary techniques and subtle body physiology of *prāṇa mārga nivṛtti sādhana* through a dialogue between preceptor and pupil by using symbolic phrases that hide explicit details from the uninitiated. However, behind this somewhat codified and concealed language lies internal agreement and implicit references to the same remarkable subtle physiology that we find outlined in the later medieval *haṭhayoga* manuals. What we see is a genetic or family similarity in which *yoga*-identified *upaniṣad* tell us that *prāṇa* pervades the vital forces of the entire operating mind/body, and that it can be contacted via various biological and psychological functions, such as breathing, movement, visualization, repetition of *mantra*, etc. Since *prāṇa* derives directly from the self or *ātman*, it is through the path of *prāṇa* that the process of *nirodha* unfolds, leading eventually to absolute identification with *parabrahman*. In *haṭhayoga* this goal is recast in decidedly theistic terms as Śiva-Śakti. Consequently, the cessation of the circulation of *prāṇa*, that is to say, Śakti, in the mind/body of the adept practitioner essentially establishes

and an initiatory part of the entire system, but also essential to its very fulfilment. The subtle teachings treated in several *Yoga Upaniṣads*, such as *Kṣurikā*, *Amṛtabindu*, *Yogaśika*, Hamsa, and *Dhyānabindu*, are also intriguingly reminiscent of later *haṭhayoga* manuals and are considered authoritative within the *haṭhayoga sampradāya*. In the pan-Indian literature one finds on *yoga* that self-cultivation exercises are, without a doubt, central to the acquisition of knowledge and the higher attainments of *rājayoga* (HYP 1:2; 2: 76-77; 4:102; GS 1:2), *kaivalya* (aloneness, YS 4:24-34; HYP 6:62) and *mokṣa*, contribute what I refer to as the "active" voice (*karma*) of the tradition. Nonetheless, it is a voice that must inevitably be silenced via the very self-cultivation techniques that once mediated the practitioner's own transformation (HYP 4: 11; YS 4:1-13).

The paradox that characterizes this internal pattern is marked in the human body (*piṇda*, *śarīra*) by an intricate, though identifiable, design that is forged from the confluence of macrocosmic and microcosmic energies that are intimately and eternally bound together (HYPR 1:10; *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 2.3.1-6; *Chāṇdogya Upaniṣad* 6.1-16). Typically, in non-dualist Śaiva traditions such as *haṭhayoga*, the individual human body (i.e., matter, *prakṛti*) is considered to be the absolute presence of energy (*Śakti*, *prāṇa*[12]) concentrated in a particular configuration or *nāma-rūpa* (name and form). It is ultimately indistinguishable and inseparable from Śiva (GS 7:12-13; SS 1:34, 46, 52; HYP 4: 102, 4; 77). However, before this identification emerges, the biological body must be purged or purified of its tendencies toward diffluence (e.g., *saṁkalpas*, HYP 4:7), which essentially obscure and tenuate the dialogue between the integral energies of the microcosm and the macrocosm.[13] To accomplish this process of dynamic evolution, *haṭhayoga* tradition has identified and documented an intensive, exploratory program of sophisticated, psycho-physiological procedures, based on fundamental, pan-Indian, yogic principles

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the state of Śivahood (or *Śivatva*, *nirodha*, *samādhi*).

[12]Throughout Kṛpālvānanda's commentary the word '*prāṇa*' is used synonymously with '*śakti*' and '*brahman*' (HYPR 2:2; see also *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* 2:1).

[13]For a useful discussion of this idea in Vedic thought, see Brian K. Smith, *Reflections on Resemblance, Ritual, and Religion*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1989. Also, bear in mind that the macro-level constitutes the theoretical canopy for understanding the human body.

that work toward perfecting the receptivity of the human body for a subjective, first-person understanding of precisely what the terms self cultivation and transcendence mean. But, true to its paradoxical nature, in most instances this experience is said to lie beyond description, for it implies an innate inability to express or convey the experience through language (HYP 4:32, 58) since the very process of *haṭhayoga* itself leads not only to an experience beyond textuality but, more importantly, to the absorption or complete cessation of all bodily and mental states (e.g., *nirbīja samādhi*, HYP 4:101, 108; see also YS 1:2).

4. Practical Goal: Self-Cultivation

In this principle of *nirbīja samādhi* lies another inherent paradox. According to Kṛpālvananda, the techniques of *haṭhayoga* engage the totality of mind and body and awaken the adept to the unconditional recognition of the unity of all existence, that is, the particular and the universal are not only One, they also present a unified flow of energy that embraces both rest *and* activity. Śakti (i.e., dormant Śiva) is embodied in the particular, or the self-manifesting world of form and appearance (e.g., *samsāra*, *nāmarūpa*). That is "her" domain (HYP 4:101), and it is this very location in the realm of cause and effect that empowers the adept practitioner to create the conditions for wholeness by undertaking and training in the arduous strategies of self cultivation. Indeed, it is the *karma*, will or agency of Śakti as the immanent and dynamic power of reality that makes the conscious cultivation of self (*ātman*) possible (GS 7:12-13). Paradoxically, they also cause "her" arrest in the subsequent attainment of cessation or *nirodha* (i.e., dormant Śakti, HYP 3:107-108; SS 3:61, 5:157-9).

Therefore, we see that Śakti does not lie enclosed in a veil of ignorance according to *haṭhayoga* tradition, nor does she stand outside or beyond the world of appearances as a model of transcendence closed upon itself. Rather, the significance of Śiva-Śakti as an absolute, coextensive and non-dual blueprint of reality lies in how they function in precise relation to the world and, most importantly, in relation to the human body wherein their conscious meeting takes place. This divine realization, which is a precondition of *yoga* attainment, suggests an endless expansion through various homologous and symbolic relations, including, somewhat paradoxically, the simultaneous and seemingly

contradictory experience of action (Śakti) and inaction (Śiva).[14] Indeed, this is the very meaning of the word 'paradox' as defined by Kalamaras, that is to say, "two apparently contradictory things at once."[15]

Specifically, the SS and the HYP explain that the spiritual goals of *haṭhayoga* or, for that matter, any *yoga*-identified tradition based on *advaita* principles, are to unveil or directly disclose this seemingly paradoxical reality which lies beyond our ordinary, perceptual frontiers. When and if this is attained, the adept emerges from the root constraint of ignorance and thereby extinguishes the ego-identified, psycho-physiological constitution[16] premised on an afflictive, polarized, or subject-object view of reality (SS 1:46; HYP 4:77). Consequently, from the perspective of the *haṭhayoga* textual tradition, cause and effect (e.g., subject and object, moon and moonlight, tree and shadow, etc.[17]) are not separate, unity between Śiva and Śakti is always present, and this liberating knowledge which is clarified through the *haṭhayoga* path is believed to be available to anyone who earnestly "practices" (HYP 1:64-66; GS 1:5). The path is portrayed as leading to a goal that is realizable, insofar as the exercises constitute the "gateway" or "ladder" by which one advances to higher states of unmediated or pure consciousness (HYP 1:1, 2:76; GS 1:1; HR 1:2, 16[18]). In this sense, self-cultivation techniques also provide a unique lens into an aspect of performative and ritualistic orthopraxy, which, in its own unique way, is now becoming a somewhat conventional (albeit popularized) part of contemporary

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[14]Here we could include a long list of complimentary pairs such as full and empty, left and right, positive and negative, hot and cold, sun and moon, consonant and vowel, and so on.

[15]Kalamaras, *Reclaiming the Tacit Dimension*, 14.

[16]We also see this in Christian mysticism. For example, Meister Eckart refers to the renunciation of ego or "own-ness" as *eigenschaft* (Sölle, "The Language of Mysticism," 163).

[17]Goraknāth also describes this non-duality as *dīpaśikhā* and *dīpaloka*. For more details, see Banerjea, *Philosophy of Goraknāth*, 63. The SSP (1:4) says: "*Śivasya abhyantare Śaktih Śakter abhyantare Śivah/Antaram naiva jāniyat candra-candrikayor iva.*"

[18]In the HR, Srinivasabhatta contradicts himself at points by suggesting that *rājayoga* precedes *haṭhayoga*. Compare HR 1:8 and HR 1:16. However, in HR 1:18 he clarifies that they are, in fact, interdependent. In other words, the practice of one ensures success in the practice of the other.

social and spiritual life. What is, I think, more significant is that this performative discourse is inextricably yoked to Indian traditions' own culturally identified conception and understanding of ultimacy. As such, it provides a rich and vital resource of regulatory and purificatory practices that not only are regarded by the tradition as essential to the understanding of higher states of consciousness, but they also offer us a remarkable opportunity to examine the various embodied forms that these states of consciousness assume in a human person.[19]

Hence, a primary contribution of Indian *yoga*-identified traditions in general, and *haṭhayoga*-identified traditions in particular, is not so much their philosophical wisdom (*jñāna*), which according to tradition cannot really be described (*anākhya*), but rather the radical presuppositions underlying the psycho-physical procedures they propose, such as *khecari*, *vajrolī*, *amarolī mudrā*, and so forth. *Haṭhayoga* techniques are intended as a coherent body of corporeal practices that guarantee to gradually manoeuvre the *yogin/ī* through his/her individual, psycho-somatic universe toward a direct experience and an intuitive understanding that the primary goal of *yoga* is not so much concerned with belief, philosophy or language (Staals 1989, 399-400), but, rather, with a pragmatic and thoroughly functional ritual paradigm that ensures incremental progress and the direct discovery of culturally constructed principles and laws (*dharma*) which are inextricably linked though not limited to matter, i.e., *prakṛti* or *pradhāna* (SS 3:66, 77-83). The preliminary and preparatory nature of the praxis-oriented thrust of the tradition works through its various skilful and therapeutic means to produce or precipitate in unconditional terms the philosophy-oriented experience since, in a manner of speaking, wisdom and

[19]I am referring here to a sophisticated network of culturally identified correspondences that establishes links between the vital centres in the body (e.g., heart, throat, navel, abdomen, etc.) and particular colours, sounds (e.g., drums, bells, conches, bees, flute, etc.), elements, geometrical shapes (e.g., lotus, triangle, square, etc.), sacred sites (e.g., rivers, mountains), indwelling deities, physical postures which often resemble zoomorphic forms, and the nervous system with its web of 72,000 meridians and seven primary nerve plexuses that correspond to organs and other somatic areas. Also, in Indian tradition the *guru* is able to discern the progress of the disciple through their physical strength and endurance, the slimness and lustre of their body, their health and steadiness of mind, the control of their sexual passion, the purification of the *nādīs*, the retention of breath, and the completion of *khecari mudrā*, to name just a few examples (HYP 2:19, 78).

means (or theory and practice) do not represent a *sui generis* but rather the perfect cultivation of culturally constructed metaphysical representations. It is in this sense that no radical epistemological difference ultimately exists between them. The paradox lies in the systematic and complex cultivation of what is already believed to be innately present, but not yet explicitly recognized. The preparatory path of *haṭhayoga* self-cultivation merges or develops beyond all limitation into the integral path of *rājayoga* wherein all dualities dissolve into indivisible nothingness or *śūnyatā*. Thus, it seems quite clear that the relationship between praxis and theory not only conveys a complex, symbolic organization, and the cultural expression of cognitive beliefs about the potency of self cultivation, but also an immensely rich tradition generating an internal language replete with paradox.

Hence, one significant function of the fourfold *upāya* or methodology proposed in the HYP and the SS, as I mentioned, is its intrinsic ability to subvert and undermine spiritual ignorance, afflictive emotions, and entrenched notions of a separate ego or self-identity (SS 1:35-46). According to the HYP and the SS, once properly developed, the mature and skilful performance of *yoga* praxis penetrates the individual's psycho-physiological constitution only to unveil a metaphysical clarity that can oftentimes expose some of our most deeply held assumptions about the nature of reality, such as duality (HYP 4:60; HYPR 4:60; see also KU 4:11), individuality (SS 1:68), the inevitability of death (HYP 4:103), the conditioned nature of mind (HYP 4:58-61), the epistemological limitations of language, and so on. Ideally, the seemingly radical distinction between practice and theory dissolves in proportion to the degree of mastery of the exercises. However, once again, herein lies the paradox. Having mastered the various embodied techniques, and having had faith and confidence in their efficacy, their usefulness is now emptied of purpose and motivation (i.e., *karma*). The cumulative effects of self-cultivation curiously foreclose on the necessity of formal disciplines and render them empty (*śūnyatā*, *akarma*, HYP 4:57). Yet, it is virtually impossible to disengage the two since this inevitable outcome is already foreshadowed in the ideology of self-cultivation how-to manuals. Indeed, it is inherent in the very fabric of their thinking, and in their promise and assurance of direct experience through a life dedicated to *sādhana*. Hence, the practices prescribed in the *haṭhayoga* tradition not only valorise experience, they actually claim to produce it (SS 5: 209). Paradoxically, they also cause their own extinction. The explanation for this resides not only in the

theological, philosophical and metaphysical belief in the radical identitary logic of absolute non-duality but, more importantly, in the individual practitioner's complex relationship with transcendent reality which is constituted by culture, and is validated experientially in and through every fibre of human body.

5. Importance of Private Practical Instruction

This kind of practical and applied knowledge on which the *haṭhayoga* tradition is founded forms a distinct type of *jñāna* or *vidyā* that is acquired in *sādhana* through experience resulting from persistent effort and skilful means. Each adept has to accomplish this task by himself/herself, and there are no intermediaries. As the particular procedures outlined in distinct *haṭhayoga* manuals suggest, the crucial metaphor in this tradition is *mārga* or path. This is not intended to dismiss or deny the fundamental role and function of philosophy in Indian *haṭhayoga* tradition. Rather, merely to emphasize and underscore the oversight of Western scholarly attention to the various practical means of *haṭhayoga* which not only are highly praised in Indian tradition, but without them transcendence seems all but unattainable. The power and insight of philosophical knowledge is cultivated in the initiated disciple primarily through the acquisition of what recent cognitive scientists have called the "embodied-enactive"[20] approach. To understand *haṭhayoga* through its own cultural terminology, however, we need to recognize the distinct *gnosis* that emerges from the penetrating activity of *sādhana* or spiritual exercise.

One could also argue, as we compare the aphoristic, extremely confusing and ambiguous instructions put forth by various accounts, that language plays a secondary and paradoxical role in the *haṭhayoga* textual tradition. Indeed, we see repeatedly in the exposition of the textual and oral accounts of this tradition that language (and, by extension, reason) ultimately fails to capture, convey and transmit spiritual experience. Hence, ritual techniques are typically transmitted by demonstration rather than by language (Staals 1989, 372). We also observe an expressed belief in secrecy (GS 5:168, 185; HYP 1:11; SS 5:206-207; see

[20]As Snellegrove declares, "it is not the philosopher who gives life to a religion, but the man who succeeds in practising it, and in India the practicer *par excellence* has always been the *yogin*." Also, see the recent work of Francisco J. Varela, Evan Thompson, and Eleanor Rosch, *The Embodied Mind: Cognitive Science and Human Experience*, Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1993.

also KU 2:23; MU 3:3), and a preference for direct transmission (e.g., *Śaktipata*) through the *guru-śiṣya* lineage (HYP 1:14; 2:1; 4:8; SS 5:192, 196) which reinforces the idea of private, rather than public, instruction.[21] The reason for this, once again, lies in the central notion of paradox, for only by direct experience can the *coincidentia oppositorum* (or the conjunction of opposites), as Carl Jung calls it, be understood.

To further illustrate this point of ambiguity and paradox, verbal instructions in the HYP (3:32-37) describing the practice of *khecari mudrā* appear to intentionally distort the intended primary experience of collecting, retaining and drinking *amṛta*. For example, the GS (1:25) suggests "peculiar iron instruments" and a cutting duration of "three years." This differs from the HR and the HYP which refer to a sharp weapon made of milkhedge leaf to cut the frenal (HR 2:121, 127; HYP 2: 34) and, according to the HYP, the procedure takes up to six months to complete. The SS refrains from providing any specific instructions whatsoever as to how this *mudrā* might actually be accomplished (4:31-37).

Kṛpālvananda's commentary, based on his own experiential claims, clarifies for the adept that this process occurs spontaneously (*sahaja*), therefore, no special implements whatsoever are required. He agrees that the frenal gland has to be cut, and the uvula prepared (*rudra granthi*), but Kṛpālvananda contends that *khecari mudrā* occurs through the force (*haṭha*) and natural (*sahaja*) activity of intense *prāṇa sādhanā*, rather than by an imposed act of wilful cutting which various *haṭhayoga* texts imply. He explains that voluntary or wilful cutting of the frenal gland actually defeats the very purpose of *khecari mudrā*, which is to cultivate and enable the spontaneous drinking of *amṛta* (SS 4:32; HYPR 3:43). One clarification he provides is that the sense organ associated with the *svādhisthāna cakra* is the tongue (*rasana*), hence, when the *sadhak/ā* raises *āpāna*, and purifies this *cakra* completely, *khecari mudrā* will manifest automatically (HYPR 3:43).

Using the instructions for *khecari* as an example, it is virtually impossible, as far as I can see, to comprehend the advanced *mudrās* catalogued in the HYP, GS, SS, and so on, chiefly on the basis of the scanty instructions provided.

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[21]The idea of private rather than public practice is also reinforced in the HYP, GS, and SS's descriptions of the place (*maṭha*) where the *yogin* should live (SS 3:3; GS 5: 5-7; HYP 1:12-14) and the directive to practice in seclusion (HYP 1:16; SS 5:5:184).

Consequently, the sources that appear to provide detailed instructions are, paradoxically, the very same sources that intentionally mislead. It also is abundantly clear from Kṛpālvānanda's commentary, situated alongside other texts in the tradition, that the self-cultivated body/mind generates its own internal knowledge of a distinct and orderly inner landscape that is governed by specific and discernible causal laws that can be grasped only by those who have learned, experienced, and mastered its highly specialized and symbolic vocabulary through repetitive practice and contemplative refinement. By understanding the intricate and systematic interdependence between spontaneous manifestations arising in the body during *yogasādhana* and their corresponding stages of self cultivation, perhaps we can begin to create a conceptual framework for our research that reflects the *haṭhayoga* tradition's intent as an embodied path relying on paradox in the pursuit of spiritual awakening.

In *haṭhayoga* tradition, the individual body of the *yogin/ī* is believed to be the epitome of the cosmic body of Śiva-Śakti (GS 7:2, 7:12-13), and practice appears to be the ritual instrument that renders a subjective experience of this higher reality possible. Consequently, the *yogin/ī* must be thoroughly acquainted with the constitution of the human body. In his commentary, Kṛpālvānanda explains this interdependence according to the principle of the five *vāyus*. For example, when the *sādhakā* spontaneously experiences *vajrolī*, *yoni*, and/or *Śakticalanā mudrā*, it is an indication that *āpāna vāyu* is moving upwards through the body and is working in the *svādhistāna* region. Similarly, when the belly fills with air and then is forcefully drawn against the back of the spine and up towards the thorax (referred to as *plavini kumbhaka* with *uḍḍīyāna bandha*), this is evidence that *samāna vāyu* has reached the *manipāra cakra* (navel). When the chest area expands spontaneously through various spontaneously arising *āsanas*, such as *khanjanadi*, the *sadhakā* experiences *prāṇa* moving in the *anāhata cakra*. As the *prāṇa* rises with the assistance of *sarvangāsana* (shoulder stand) or *halāsana* (plough posture) accompanied by *tribandha* (three locks), it is a sign that the *prāṇa* has reached the *viśuddha cakra* (HYPR 2:4-6). Continuing in this way, *prāṇa* penetrates all of the energy centres in the body to clear stored afflictive emotions and imbalances. However, Kṛpālvānanda cautions the reader that this method is not wilful. Rather, he maintains that it is based on the underlying premise of Śakti as *sahaja*, that is to say, the "natural" and the "spontaneous" provide the most direct and expedient means to

realization. It is in this sense that the *yogin/ī*'s body, like the symbol of a self-arising *yantra*,[22] becomes a somatic vehicle of spiritual realization wherein the individual human form unveils the inscribed metaphysical map of *yoga* teachings using so-called action oriented procedures. However, the paradox that is implied by Kṛpālvananda's commentary is that wilful action alone cannot ultimately liberate the *yogin/ī*, it can only create the physical and hygienic conditions that are requisite for further mental training. In this sense, *haṭhayoga* is simply a means and not an end.

6. Heuristic Techniques and Culture of Human Body

We see a rich proliferation of heuristic techniques (*upāya*) and approaches prescribed by the diverse schools of Indian *yoga*, but the *haṭhayoga* textual tradition as we know it typically addresses the culture of the human body (*kāyasādhana*) first. This ensures the removal of any obvious physical or emotional obstacles that could potentially arise when attempting to sit in meditation for extended periods of time. Stated in general terms, once the initial practices have prepared the body and expanded the practitioner's basic mode of cognition, sensing, awareness, etc., s/he can proceed to more subtle and spontaneous practices which awaken and, subsequently, control and sublimate the life-force (*prāṇa* or Śakti). Hence, the central issue is *sādhana* of self cultivation which embraces an instrumental and ultimately holistic strategy intended to navigate the professional practitioner gradually through the fundamental principles of meaning and metaphysical insight (*ātmavidyā*, *yogavidyā*, or *prajñā*). In the process, the primary pair Śiva-Śakti become the paradigmatic, theological model for the construction of numerous homologues which consistently derive meaning not only from their ultimate union, but also from their simultaneous and eternal unfolding in time and space, e.g., the human body (GS 1:37-42). This seemingly gendered discourse, which on the surface appears to signal duality, is progressively deconstructed through the *sādhana* or self-cultivation process itself. That is, we encounter the paradox of self cultivation through the scriptural and oral accounts (*āgamas*) which, on the one hand, promote rigorous practice and activity while leading, on the other hand, to

[22]For an excellent study of the human body as *yantra* see Madhu Khanna, *Yantra: The Tantric Smbol of Cosmic Unity*, 1979, Reprint, Rochester, Vermont: Inner Traditions, 2003.

their complete renunciation (*vairagya*), cessation (*nirodha*) and silence (*mauna*) in the final stages of the self cultivation process, signified in the literature by such terms as *rājayoga*, *nirvāṇa*, *mahāpralaya*, *śūnya*, *unmanī*, *jīvanmukti*, *samādhi*, and so on (HYP 4:3). These critical markers paradoxically foreclose on the assumption that division or duality is eternal and, consequently, that ultimate meaning can ever be disclosed or revealed through words since, by its very nature, language is a "system of differences."[23] Instead, the goal and intent of these embodied exercises are to be released eventually from practical means (*karma* or "consequential activity") once the physical and mental obscurations and afflictions (*kleśa*) are eradicated and the potential of human understanding is perfectly recognized by the *yogin/ī*. However, when that level of human understanding is firmly established, inasmuch as the mind is fully integrated toward itself (HYP 4:7) and is completely free of discursive thought or conceptualization (HYP 4:55, 56, 61, 104), then the basic categories and the necessity of *haṭhayoga* practice become greatly attenuated.

In the context of practice, sexuality also is a crucial and paradoxical component of *haṭhayoga* and is often a vastly misunderstood and enigmatic subject. Certain *yogic* exercises, such as *śakticālanā*, *vajrolī*, *sambhavī*, and *sahajolī mudrā*, appear to be explicitly preoccupied with sexuality; yet, *haṭhayoga* advocates a monastic and renunciant lifestyle (HYP 1:57) that strictly forbids the company of women (HYP 1:62; SS 3:33). The underlying rationale for celibacy (*brahmacarya*, *urdhvareta*) is derived from the basic and fundamental understanding of Śakti. Three factors, namely, the stimulation of sexual energy, the ability to internalize the so-called sexual act, and the apparent ability to reverse the flow of sexual energy (e.g., *vajrolī mudrā*) are intimately linked to attainment inasmuch as it is thought that these practices propel the self cultivation process. Moreover, according to Kṛpālvananda, the techniques themselves are imbued with considerable symbolic significance (HYPR 1:10) that was at one time available only to the initiated and highly deserving *yogin/īs*. The sexual theories described in various interpretations of the internal, subtle physiology of the human body maintain that the stimulation of yogic fire (*yogāgni*) and *āpāna vāyu*, and the retention and the reversal of sexual energy and fluids in *sādhana*, are of utmost value to the overall aims of the self

[23]Saussure cited in Steven W. Leacock, *The Mind as Mirror*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1944, 43.

cultivation process, such as health, longevity, bliss, etc. (HYPR 1:10).

The reason why sexuality plays such a conspicuous and consequential role is that, once again, at the root of Indian *haṭhayoga* tradition lies the fundamental belief in the union of Śiva and Śakti. Consequently, the *mudrās* and other embodied practices also presuppose this ontological union. The perceived sexual impetus is, therefore, contingent upon a deeper understanding of their subtle and, at times, not so subtle, relationship within the human body of the *yogin/ī* through such experiences as *śakticālanā mudrā*. These techniques of embodied practice that offer more advanced and expedient means, also work to internalize the energy to a greater degree and, subsequently, create potential conditions, which are subject to misuse and misinterpretation precisely because of the powerful, yet subtle, psychological and physiological experiences generated at various stages of the self cultivation process. However, the efficacy of these embodied strategies lies in the adept practitioner's ability not only to harness, but also to refine, that is to say, to purify and pacify the energy that is stimulated and absorbed in the process. Herein lies the secretive and the initiatory component of the *guru-śiṣya* relationship insofar as it prevails as a necessary and vital instrument of explication and clarification. Thus, the very energy or force (*haṭha*) that fuels the entire process paradoxically stimulates sensual experience especially in the preliminary or *vāmamārga* stages of *haṭhayoga*, whereas it is subject to spontaneous internal renunciation or *vairāgya* in the higher stages (HYPR 1:10). We also see that the terminology of *advaita* is framed in increasingly equalitarian terms of reference once the purification of duality (*dvaita*) is complete (e.g., Ardhanārīśvara).

7. Mind-Body Union

In this paper, we need not, nor can we, mention everything. It is necessary to look at only a few outstanding principles and practices so that we might come to understand how they proceed in a strict and formal sense. Based on the underlying theological premise of a radical identitary logic, the mind and body (Śakti) can be understood not only as the living or dynamic presence of primordial Śiva (*nāma-rūpa*) but, more importantly for our study, as *pratimā* (or likeness). In other words, the body of the *yogin/ī* conforms to some extent with the doctrine of correspondences and their counterparts developed earlier in the Vedic repertoire and, thus, partakes of the presence of Śiva through the theistic

reinterpretation of the concept of *pratimā*. The various energy systems (*cakras*) in the body and the mind simply parallel this coextensive causal relationship. If such philosophical and metaphysical presuppositions provide a genuine and authentic substructure, enframing and engaging the approach to *haṭhayoga* practice, then, there also must be utter inseparability and interpenetrability between them at every level of experience.[24] The notion that the adept performs ritual identification practice, in this case the programmatic strategies of *haṭhayoga*, in order to participate in and become more fully aware of the cosmic plan, is a concept well developed in Indian religion. The ritual processes through which the adept must go have to be carefully composed and adhered to. From preliminary physical and mental acts of purification, to the cultivation of more subtle states of consciousness, the four-fold *upāya* is generally uniform in most *haṭhayoga* manuals and, although there can be slight variations, the underlying premise is a deeply embedded doctrine of resemblance and ritual identification. Since Western religious models typically do not endorse such holistic positions and, at times, are even patently contradictory, the justification for dismissing the culture of the body and its fundamental epistemological role in the acquisition of knowledge seems obvious in the field of religious studies.[25]

Still, we admit that the empirical evidence produced by *yogins* and *yoginīs* is ultimately doomed, not by Western, phenomenological or historical investigation, but rather by the innate paradox inherent within the heart of the practice itself. The interdependence between practice and wisdom itself necessitates the annihilation of formal *sādhana*. However, this is a peril that is

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[24]Douglas suggests that there is a "strong tendency to replicate the social situation in symbolic form by drawing richly on bodily symbols in every possible dimension" (Mary Douglas, *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology*, London: Barrie & Rockliff, 1970, vii). In *haṭha* and *tantra yoga*, theology and cosmology provide complex symbolic references for the systematic classification of the human body. These symbolic references are used to codify the yogic body, and indicate the broader categories through which the human body is known. In this sense, the physical and subtle bodies delineated in the *haṭhayoga* textual tradition express social meanings that are specific to this context. Therefore, these are learned categories, rather than "natural" ones and, therefore, they reflect the broader social world and its symbolic meanings, hierarchies, behaviours, and so on.

[25]For an interesting collection of articles on contemporary Western perspectives on the body, see Sarah Coakley, ed. *Religion and the Body*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997.

certainly not unwelcome by the adept practitioner as it effectively signals the awakening of *nirbīja samādhi* and insight into the non-dual nature of reality. The real magic of self-cultivation, whatever configuration it assumes, is simply to enable this inevitable end.

In this sense, the pairing together of practice and wisdom, as the tradition itself does, encourages fluidity and vital engagement through the role and function of the self-cultivation process. Since reality is identified as both immanent and transcendent (i.e., Śiva-Śakti, HYP 4:101), the flow of energy in the human body toward emanation and resorption is seen to be of divine origination working continuously in union with the underlying substrate of the conscious universe. As White states, "hypostasized forms of the divine energy" appear in the *yogic* body as "a set of concentric circles (*cakras*)" and are arranged more or less in a pattern of hierarchical ascent. The notion of a hierarchical ascent is well known in Indian tradition and it provides an appropriate metaphor to depict the upward motion or pilgrimage of the primordial life-force (*kuṇḍalinī-śakti* or *prāṇa*) inasmuch as it rises upright through the subtle body of the adept practitioner from the root *cakra* (or *mūlādhāra*) toward its goal in the crown *cakra* (*sahasrāra*) once it is fully awakened and purified by the techniques of *haṭhayoga*. However, when Śakti reaches this final destination in the *sahasrāra cakra*, "she" loses all power of activity (*karma*) and becomes dormant (i.e., Śiva, *akarma*, *niskala*). In this sense, Śiva represents the inactive, passive and void nature (*akarma*, *avakāśa*, *śūnyatā*) of totality, which transcends all distinctions, is devoid of *vāsana* and dwells in the absence of orgination and cessation. Whereas Śakti expresses the plenum or the active and full (*karma*, *pūrṇatā*) nature of totality (SSP 1:32; HYP 4:101; HYPR), together they are one, and it is precisely the simultaneous juxtaposition of fullness and emptiness that appears most paradoxical.[26]

[26]In the following passage, Mark Dyczkowski points to a similar paradox in Kashmir Śaivism with regard to the role of the adept. He writes: "When Śiva and Śakti unite, the universe, formerly experienced as a reality set apart from consciousness, ceases to exist. When they separate, it is once more created. The eternal rhythm of cosmic creation and destruction is consonant with the pulse of their union and separation. The yogi who witnesses this union experiences the birth of a higher level of consciousness within himself. He recognizes the all-powerful pulsation of his consciousness as it moves between Śankara's transcendent bliss and the radiant emission of His immanent power within Himself. One fixed and the other moving, these two poles are like fire-sticks that, rubbing

To understand this state of supreme consciousness, the adept's insights are invaluable, though they are frequently hidden in highly symbolic terms. *Haṭhayoga* is specifically concerned with promoting self-cultivation through the power of action (Śakti) and, paradoxically, this is considered successful when it leads the *yogin/ī* to levels of attainment, such as *laya*, that go beyond the reach of practice. The goal also is to purify attachment to discursive actions such as the formulation of thought constructs (or *citta-śakti*). Once these necessary goals are attained, and there is no remainder or seed (*bīja*) whatsoever, the vehicle of practice becomes essentially unnecessary. The self-cultivation process through disciplined means and embodied strategies (i.e., the agency of Śakti) reaches its culmination at the beginning of the *sabīja samādhi* or the end of *haṭhayoga*. Here, the purification of the five elements (earth, water, fire, air, and space) corresponding to the five *prāṇas* (*āpāna* or *nāga*, *vyāna*, *udāna*, *samāna*, *prāṇa*) and the five senses (smell, taste, sight, sound, touch) is complete, rendering the body a fit (i.e., pure and receptive) vessel for the conscious presence of non-dual awareness. Mediated entirely by Śakti, the process utilizes various pathways and vital breaths, etc., located in the human body in order to eventually dissolve the diversity of "her" sensory, mental and physical energies in the crown *cakra*. Śakti is the reality through which consciousness (Śiva) knows itself, therefore, up to the edge of self knowledge the process of self-cultivation is an action-oriented path (*kriyā-śakti*). Beyond this point, action (Śakti) paradoxically dissolves into Śiva (i.e., *laya*) and, subsequently, the stage of "no means" (*anupāya*) begins. One could say that this is actually the beginning of *yoga* (union), and that until this point the self-cultivation process was simply its means (*upāya*). Herein lies the ultimate paradox inasmuch as the basis of cause (path, *samsāra*) and effect (goal, *nirvāna*) is non-dual.

8. The Feminine Divine in *Haṭhayoga*

In closing, it is important to say something about the role of the feminine divine in *haṭhayoga* because it too is somewhat of a paradox. The ideological aspects of *haṭhayoga* traditions have on the whole been much more inclusive of the "feminine" in their teachings. In a recent study (2002) I draw attention to this,

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together, generate within Śankara His pure *Spanda* energy" (Mark S. G. Dyczkowski, *The Doctrine of Vibration: An Analysis of the Doctrines and Practices of Kashmir Shaivism*, 1987, Reprint, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1989, 100).

although I also point out the pervasive privileging of the "masculine" role. Here, it is important to mention the possibility of revision in the interpretation of the feminine with respect to the way "she" operates not only at the level of practice, but also in terms of "her" primacy and pervasiveness as a metaphysical voice within the tradition. The question as to whether this promotes gender equality at the level of "real" women is still an important and paradoxical one. While many women have been permitted access to the lived tradition, overall the textual tradition is still associated with and dominated primarily by male adepts. There is no doubt that the system of *haṭhayoga* as articulated in its theoretical and practical teachings, at times, reproduces relations of male privileging by reducing the status of the feminine/female through less privileged associations, for example, left, negative, *saṃsāra*, temptress, locus of fear, etc. Paradoxically, there also is ample evidence to show that women have become accomplished practitioners, *gurus* and creators of discourse, and that the divine feminine as Śakti has been celebrated. Through engaged methods of historical analysis that involve description, redescription, and the rectification of gendered categories we begin to see that the metaphysical union of male and female in the *haṭhayoga* tradition can be revisited and in so doing must address the concerns of "real" women. There is no doubt that within the tradition itself there is a marked ambivalence; yet, we also see that the most essential act of direct, oral transmission of the sacred teachings proceeds in the form of a dialogue from Śiva to Pārvatī. In this exchange it seems plausible and possible to reconstruct a crucial evidential precedent for female agency and participation, and argue that women along with men have equal access and status in this tradition.

9. Conclusion

I have tried to show throughout this paper that the *haṭhayoga* tradition elevates the spiritual path of self-cultivation through the human body. In its applied understanding of bodily technologies we see an extraordinary richness that, in my view, has enabled the West to see more clearly the enormous scope and depth of the human psycho-spiritual matrix. I also have shown that the only means of perceiving this embodied insight lies in the efficacy of paradox. In other words, to become completely absorbed in the state of *nirbīja samādhi* is, paradoxically, to become psychically undifferentiated from the dualities of the phenomenal world, or, returning to where I began at the outset of this paper, to experience directly the meaning of the *Īśā Upaniṣad*.

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ISLAM AND CULTURE OF LIFE

James Narithookil[♦]

1. Introduction

Islam provides a harmonious balance in the life of human beings by putting together the worldly life and spiritual life side by side. This world has been meant for man and everything in it has been made subservient to him. Life in Islam is viewed into one whole life – a life of complete submission to God[1] in order to earn His pleasure with the hope of Divine Reward. A human person has to live his/her life on earth within the limits ordained by God with the realization that at the end, one would be judged according to the manner he/she uses the period of the short sojourn. God should occupy the central position in the thought and actions of human beings. "Nothing is the life of this world but play and amusement. But best is the Home in the Hereafter, for those who are righteous. Will you not then understand?"[2] This concept develops the spiritual and moral life of a human person and seeks to refine every fiber of individual's aspect of life and one's social environment with the healthiest and noblest moral standard.

2. Dignity of Humanity

Islam advocates numerous peace-building values supported by *Qur'an* and *Hadith*[3] and expects Muslims to live by them. One of these values is

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[1]Islam means submission or surrender to the will of God and a Muslim is the one who has surrendered his will to God.

[2]The Holy Qur'an, Surat Al-An'am 6:32. The Qur'anic verses are taken from *The Holy Qur'an* (English Translation of the Meanings and Commentary), revised and edited by the Presidency of Islamic Researches, IFTA.

[3]Hadith means "a saying," which technically also means, Tradition, records of what Muhammad did or enjoined, or was done in his presence and not forbidden by him.

expressed in the *Qur'an*: "O ye who believe! Stand out firmly for *Allah*, as witness to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety and fear *Allah*. For Allah is well-acquainted with all that you do."[4]

God made man the best of creations giving him special gifts and privileges not bestowed to other creations. He has created him essentially as a rational being and given the power to distinguish right from wrong and to understand the reality and the purpose of his existence. "It is He [*Allah*], who hath made you the inheritors of the earth: He hath raised you in ranks, some above others: that He may try you in the gifts He hath given you: for the Lord is quick in punishment yet He is indeed Oft forgiving, most Merciful."[5] Forcing man to follow the right path makes him a puppet, which is inconsistent with the gift of free will. That is why nobody is compelled to accept Islam against his will. "Let there be no compulsion in religion: Truth stands out clear from error..."[6]

3. *Jihad*

President George Bush declared a crusade against Osama bin Laden soon after the attack on the World Trade Centre and the pentagon on 11 September 2001. *Al Qaeda* chief Osama bin Laden has made *Jihad* (Holy War) a powerful weapon which can mesmerize Muslim youth to sacrifice their lives for a war of righteousness, the struggle against tyranny. The *Jihadis* believe that they cannot be defeated, and that, in the long run, the war will be won; in the short run, however, death will bring martyrdom and paradise. There are two kinds of *Jihad*: (i) The *Jihad al Akbar* (the greater *jihad*), which is the war against the enemy within, and (ii) The *Jihad al Asghar* (the lesser *jihad*) that is fought on the battlefield.

Jihad never exclusively meant a holy war; it could have been a social, political, economic campaign as well. It was a fight against inequality, social injustice and discrimination. But today *Jihad* has but one dimension – a violent struggle. Now there are hundreds of Islamic fundamentalists who are willing to kill and be killed for Allah. An important reason is the promise that the gates of Paradise are under the shadows of the swords. So blinded is the commitment of a *Jihadi* to the

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[4] *Surat Al-Maida* 5:8.
[5] *Surat Al-An'am* 6:165.
[6] *Surat Al-Baqarah* 2:256.

cause that those confronted with them are engaged, sooner or later, in a loosing battle. In this regard there is no much difference between a dyed-in-the-wool product of a remote *Madrasa*,[7] intent on his purpose of establishing the Empire of faith, or a Western-clad graduate from a Western university campus, modern in appearances, but equally single-minded in determination as his counterpart from the *Madrasa*.

The *Jihadi* is the same person, whether he comes from an ill-equipped *Madrasa* or an affluent university, whether he comes from the poverty of the Orient or from the plenty of the West. He celebrates death in the service of Islam and believes firmly that death in the service of the only cause worth serving is a one-way ticket to heaven. Islam is his religion and his nation; it transcends boundaries, ethnicities, colour, creed and race. He rejects secularism and any social order other than that which is defined and promoted by Islam.

4. Madrasa Training

An eight-year old Muslim, apart from attending the regular (secular) school, goes to the *Madrasa* by the side of the mosque for Islamic education after changing from the school uniform into Muslim dress. Virtually every mosque has a *Madrasa* attached to it, where the students learn the *Qur'an* and Arabic even during the vacation time. The girls are all in burqa, the boys in a long dress and white Islamic cap. The children are conditioned to the *Madrasa* system due to the psychology of copying because they see their brothers and sisters and other children coming. In *madarsas*, the children learn Arabic language, Islamic history, jurisprudence, the procedures to offering *namaaz* and performing various prayers. They follow the philosophy of Khilafa movement that sought to present a single Muslim community *(Ummah)* around the world, without any national barrier. The students are brainwashed to such an extent that they think that others persecute Muslims all over the world. Hence, it is among the *Madrasa* trained youngsters that terrorist groups are likely to search for recruits.

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[7] *Madrasa* is a school, often associated with a mosque, in which the religious subjects of Islam are studied in the traditional manner.

5. Fundamentalists

Personally, an Islamic fundamentalist asks himself if he loves *Allah* more than his own life? Spiritually, he asks whether or not he is willing to sacrifice himself in *Allah's* cause against the *Shaytan's* power and the infidel's military forces? Politically, all the nations of the world are divided into two warring camps. The nations under Islamic rule are termed, the Land of Peace (*Dar al-Islam*)[8] while the remaining nations are called the land of War (*Dar al-Harb*).[9] Hence, a *Jihadi* joyfully takes up the sword to kill and be killed in *Allah's* cause, anticipating his entrance into the gates of heavenly Paradise. Thus, martyrdom is the only assured path to Paradise.

The global *jihad* movement has largely become a "web-directed" phenomenon, which is not yet properly censured or monitored. The possibility of the pneumonic plague be made into biological weapon if a small supply of the virus could be acquired, and such a possibiilty is not ruled out. It is high time to go after the root cause of the *jihadist* problem, namely the fundamentalist *mullahs*[10] and the Islamist preachers who hide behind a façade of being religious the seeds of hatred and violence among young Muslims. The peace-loving innocent mainstream Muslims should be freed from the clutches of these *mullahs* and fundamentalists.

6. Glasnost and Perestroika

It is the need of the hour to block the terrorist attacks of the *Jihadis* by an authentic Islamic reformation. For that the traditional and outdated system of training given in the Muslim seminaries should undergo a *glasnost* and *perestroika*. Such seminaries are the haven for thorough brainwashing to produce religious fanatics. Although terrorism finds some historical precedents in a few heretical Islamic sects, Islam as such does not teach Muslims to kill innocent people in the name of religion or any political agenda. When moderate Muslims remain silent, extremists speak for all. It is high time for the silent and moderate Muslim majority to rise to the

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[8]*Dar-al-Islam* means the abode of Islam; it is a country where Islamic Law is in force, or at least where the edicts of Islam are promulgated.

[9]*Dar-al-Harb* stands for the abode of war; it is a country belonging to the infidels, which has not yet been brought under the rule of Islam.

[10]*Mullah* is a Persian form used for the Arabic *Maulavi*, a learned man, a scholar.

occasion and save Islam from the clutches of extremists. Moderate Muslims must fight against all forms of prejudice, hatred intolerance and terrorism within Muslim ranks and advocate peace and harmony for which Islam stands. The Muslim moderates should realize the *Qur'anic* mandate that Muslims are a people of moderation and justice. "Thus have We made of you an *ummah* (community) justly balanced. That you might be witnesses over the nations, and the messenger a witness over yourselves; and We appoint the *Qibla*[11] to which thou wast used, only to test those who followed the messenger from those who would turn on their heels (from the Faith). Indeed, it was a momentous (change), except to those guided by *Allah*. And never would *Allah* make your faith of no effect. For *Allah* is to all people most surely full of Kindness, most Merciful."[12] The *Qur'an*, the *Hadith*, and other Islamic traditional sources provide plenty of evidence to support the conviction that Islam is a religion of peace and justice, and that non-violent practices are well rooted in the religion.

7. Suicide Terrorism

The strategic logic of Suicide Terrorism is "dying to win." All suicide attacks are committed for a secular, strategic goal: to compel modern democracies to withdraw military forces from those territories which suicide bombers view as their homeland. The terrorists use religion as an effective recruiting tactic in serving a broader strategic goal. For the militarily disadvantaged, the suicide terror is the most effective tactical option. In other words, the militarily less privileged countries will change their strategy as and when they will become equipped with most modern weapons like warplanes, missiles, etc. The principle of altruism inspires many a suicide bomber, because they die not because they see death as desirable in itself, but in the name of a more abundant life for all. But there is a major difference between a suicide bomber and a martyr. A martyr lays down his/her life for justice and peace for all without killing anybody or doing any harm to anyone. Unfortunately, the suicide bomber takes others life as well over which he/she has no right. They ignore the principle, "End does not justify the means!"

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[11] *Qibla* is the direction to which a Muslim faces for the performance of ritual prayer; it means facing the *Ka'ba* in Mecca.

[12] Surat al-Baqara 2:143.

8. Martyrdom and Suicide

In a country under occupation suicide bomb is the most favoured tactical option. A true Muslim can become a martyr but cannot court a martyr's death deliberately. The *Qur'an* strictly forbids suicide, as it is one of the serious sins. Although suicide is banned, the *Qur'an* does endorse violence during war. Over a year ago, the Qatar-based Sheikh Yususf-al-Qardawi, one of the famous clerics of the Muslim world, issued a *fatwa*[13] legitimizing suicide bombings in extreme conditions. Muslim scholars think that an individual can become a martyr and attain Paradise if he dies fighting for a just cause. According to the teachings of the *Qur'an*, war must not be waged against the enemy but only against the aggressors.

The Muslim community today finds itself engaged in a profound struggle at this crucial moment of history, cut off from the past, faced with a present that is characterized by tyranny, poverty, and humiliation, with no viable or desirable prospects for weaving its own future. Democracy in Islam is a mere ideology, which has not taken deep root in the Islamic world because the religious and cultural foundations are inadequate to attain this goal. Today's challenge for Muslims lies in the propagation of the original ideas of Islam and a willingness to take advantage of the healthy and positive achievements of the West.

The culture of life in Islam basically rests with the Muslim moderates who, mostly, remain silent and passive. When the moderates remain silent, the extremists speak aloud, as if representing the entire Islamic world, which eventually results in the fact that the balanced views of the moderates are never heard at all.

It is high time that the Muslims become aware of the atrocities and injustices done by Muslims against their own brother Muslims either in their own country or in other Muslim countries. Muslims are supposed to stand for justice in all circumstances. It is evident from the following verse of the *Qur'an*: "And come not nigh to the orphan's property, except to improve it, until he attains the age of full strength; give measure and weight with (full) justice; no burden do We place on any soul, but that which it can bear; whenever you speak, speak justly, even if a near relative is concerned; and fulfill the covenant of *Allah*; thus doth He command

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[13] *Fatwa* is a religious or judicial verdict pronounced by the Khalifah or by a Mufti (one who gives a legal decision based on Islamic law), or Qazi.

you, that you may remember."[14] In this regard a Muslim must set aside the inferior *Jihad* (holy war) and embark up on the superior *Jihad* which is the inner struggle for godliness.

The present world of Islam is the product of centuries of interactions with other religions, sometimes hostile and at other times cordial. In the course of centuries Islam was looked upon by people of other faiths as a very conservative and closed one without sufficient scope for reform and renewal. Hence, the original focus given by *Qur'an* for a culture of life has become very bleak.

9. Mistake of Literally Interpreting the *Qur'an*

The *Qur'an* is primarily a book of religious and moral principles and exhortations. The legal teachings of the *Qur'an* are very much liberal but the interpreters of the law made it very rigid and restrictive. For example, the *Qur'an* gives women a fully pledged personality by granting the same rights over man as man has over his wife. Unlimited polygamy was strictly regulated and the number of wives was limited to four, with the condition that if a husband feared that he could not do justice among several wives, he must marry only one woman. A general principle was added to this that "you shall never be able to do justice among wives no matter how desirous you are."[15] The overall logical consequence of these pronouncements is a banning of polygamy under normal circumstances. The later interpreters of law, however, did not safeguard the spirit of the law and interpreted it literally defeating the very purpose of the law. Same is the case with the controversial triple *talaq*.[16]

10. Conclusion

Islam is a religion of peace and a culture of life when correctly understood and rightly interpreted, maintaining the spirit of the *Qur'an* and the authentic teachings of the Prophet Muhammad in not succumbing to the temptations of exploiting the religion for political power, economic gain and other vested interests. A radical and profound reformation based on

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[14] *Surat-al-An'am* 6:152.

[15] Surat-an-Nisaa 4: 3,128.

[16] *Talaq* is the sentence of divorce by triple Talaq. This is interpreted according to Shari'a as valid. At the same time, this is diametrically opposed to the very spirit of the Qur'an.

sound principles of ethics and morality expounded in the Holy *Qur'an*, the Sacred Scripture of Muslims, is called for remedying the present confusion prevalent in the Muslim world. The present frustration, humiliation, despair, and the consequent terrorism that creates much anxiety, agony and fear the world over, is a clarion call to the scholars and religious leaders of Islam to join hands to embark upon a noble venture of reviving the spiritual and moral values of Islam and, thus, to substantiate the fact that Islam is a culture of life and not death.

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TRANSCENDING DEATH

Maja Milčinski♦

1. Introduction

> "It's human nature to resist death."[1]
> "How do I know that loving life is not a delusion? How do I know that in hating death I am not like a man who, having left home in his youth, has forgotten the way back?"[2]

How is it possible to explain the phenomenon of death, the over-cultured natural phenomenon which has been deprived of its natural *wu-wei* (non-interference principle in Daoism[3]) dimension, and which after all remains the only realistic and certain stance for anyone in the face of the future? The future itself, being deprived of certainty, gave many possibilities for speculation on the significance of the Land which is the best, because it is nonexistent. As such it meant the hope for the Other, the chance to evade the paradigms of the present and already realized forms of the community.

2. The Case of Japan

In Japanese Buddhism the concept of hell was elaborated in the minutest detail, at least, as far as the Buddhist universe is concerned, during the Heian period, and Genshin has emphasized the necessity of grasping the reality of the "six paths" (rokudō) – the six lower states of existence, i.e.,

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[1]Jingsheng Wei, "The Courage to Stand Alone," *The Free China Journal* (July 5, 1997), 7.

[2]Burton Watson, *The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1968, 47.

[3]In the paper now accepted pinyin transliteration of Chinese characters is used (therefore, Daoism instead of Taoism, Zhuang Zi instead of Chuang Tzu, etc., are used).

hell, and the realms of hungry spirits, animals, asuras, men and heavenly beings; or modes of existence permeating the world of illusion, six levels to be ascended on the way towards deliverance. These six modes belong to the world of illusion through which all forms of existence perpetually transmigrate unless, of course, one enters the "way of the Buddha" and thereby opens up a finite future, extinction, a goal to be reached through four further, successive stages of enlightenment. This vision of the future in "ten realms" (*jikkai*), which, on a general level, also contain the advent of the Buddha Miroku, sets an optimistic note since it provides a prospect for escape from the eternal cycle of transmigration.

Kojiki and Nihonshoki, written in the beginning of the 8th century, are the chronicles of the time from the 4th century on when the Yamato dynasty started to conquer various smaller states. The mythological elements in the chronicles act as justification for the Yamato subjugation of all the other states; therefore, the emperor is believed to have received the power from the gods. Besides the Takama-ga-hara (The Plain of High Heaven, High Celestial Plain), the heavens far in the sky believed to be inhabited by the gods, and the actual Japan of that time which was in the middle, there was also the notion of Ne-no-kuni (The Root-Land), the place to which the dead people were supposed to retire. In this well known pantheon of the Yamato dynasty, the myth of handing over the land is included, as well as the image of an alien deity, not known among the heavenly and local deities – the architect and constructor of Japan, a small being which was believed to have come from across the sea and to have retired there as soon as the work had been accomplished. With him is connected the image of Tokoyo-no-kuni, the everlasting land. The land of bliss, which existed once and was gone forever, is, according to some explanations, also the land of rice, the paradise from where the cereals were brought. A far away land over the sea, which is actually a pre-Yamato construct, was most probably related to Daoist elements and beliefs in eternal youth and immortality.

> If one divides people into ranks the lowest is he who values his head. Those who endeavor only to amass as much knowledge as possible grow heads that become bigger and so they topple over easily, like a pyramid standing upside down. They excel in imitating others but neither originality nor inventiveness nor any great work is theirs.
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> Next come those of middle rank. For them the chest is most important. People with self-control, given to abstinence and asceticism belong to this type. These are the men with outward

> courage but without real strength. Many of the so-called great men are in this category. Yet all this is not enough.
>
> But those who regard the belly as the most important part and so have built the stronghold where the Divine can grow – these are the people of the highest rank. They have developed their minds as well as their bodies in the right way. Strength flows out from them and produces a spiritual condition of ease and equanimity. They do what seems good to them without violating any law. Those in the first category think that Science can rule Nature. Those in the second have apparent courage and discipline and they know how to fight. Those in the third know what reality is.[4]

In Japanese intellectual tradition, various techniques, known as *gyō*, formed an important part of any real philosophical undertaking, which aimed at putting into words the Absolute truth, which in its essence is inexpressible. The above quotation is just one in the vast tradition which has been re-examining the nature of the intellect; by its nature it cannot carry out its function if the distinctions among things are not created and fixed so that they appear as independent entities which are divided among themselves. The Japanese philosophical tradition, however, has been trying to overcome the one-dimensionality of rationality. It still cannot be labeled as irrational as is often thought, but must rather be considered as a-rational, transrational, or on the other side of experience and creativity.

Buddha Miroku[5] is believed to have descended from the Buddhist heaven in order to save the people. After 552 AD when Buddhism was introduced to Japan, it was a religion of the ruling elite meant to protect the land and the ruling class. Only at a later stage it was recognized as having a soteriological function. In the 10th century there arose the belief in the Western paradise where Amida, who was supposed to help any individual to salvation, ruled. The five colored strings that lead from the fingers of the dying person to Amida's statue were believed to help and direct one into Amida's Pure Land, Western paradise, Ōjō (birth in a Buddha or bodhisattva's land, especially Amida's Pure Land), salvation, or gokuraku – utmost pleasure, that which possesses ease and comfort.

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[4]K. Graf von Durckheim, *Hara: The Vital Center of Man*, London: Allen and Unwin, 1971, 176.

[5]Sk. Maitreya, "Benevolent." The bodhisattva who will appear in this world to become the next Buddha after 5,670,000,000 years when he ends his life in the Tusita Heaven (Tosotsuten). See H. Inagaki, *A Dictionary of Japanese Buddhist Terms*, Kyoto: Nagata Bunshodo, 1985, 206.

Gokuraku-jōdo became a synonym for Amida's Pure Land of Utmost Bliss.

3. Chinese Daoism

Japanese Buddhist philosophers, who are dealt with in relation to Chinese Daoists,[6] introduce with their works essential changes in our dualistically educated minds, since they confront us with a completely different way of experiencing language, thought, nature and reality. What has in European tradition been understood as certainty, as a standpoint, has been seen through in Sino-Japanese tradition as the "illusory dust of the world" (Zhuang Zi). The emergence and occurrence of the voidness and the transcendence of Ego are inextricably connected with the question of the inexpressible. When Zhuang Zi poses an explicit demand of "not to talk, not to be silent," he also brings into play the difference between conventional and absolute knowledge. The real certainty can be based only on the absolute knowledge, on the level of Absolute Truth. There is a difference between knowledge as used in Buddhist and Daoist texts and the notion of knowledge in the European tradition. The difference is illustrated with the demand "abandon knowledge" (Dao de jing). Thus, the Daoist is questioning oneself about the value of knowledge and not whether or not we have it. The fact that we are supposed to abandon knowledge constitutes the basis of certainty and the way to approach the Dao and voidness, both of which are set into the realm of Absolute Truth and, therefore, the sphere of the inexpressible. The dependence on the logical and discursive function of the language, which is supposed to express the absolute Truth, is denied. In Zhuang Zi silence becomes the only real language of voidness. Silence is the strongest expression of the void relations. It is not just any silence, but Silence as such. It is not the silence of ignorance, hostility, intimidation, but it is *prajñā*, the wisdom, which is indifferent to the formulation and the rejection of formulation.

4. Buddhism and Daoism Contrasted

When the differences among the ontological categories (being, non-being, etc.) are denied, in regard to certainty new problems arise, as well as original solutions to the old problems. The Daoist as well as Buddhist philosophers demand a radical negation as the basis for the achievement of

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[6]Sk. Maitreya, "Benevolent." The bodhisattva who will appear in this world to become the next Buddha after 5,670,000,000 years when he ends his life in the Tusita Heaven (Tosotsuten). See Inagaki, *A Dictionary of Japanese Buddhist Terms*, 206.

certainty, Absolute Truth, which is beyond the beginning and the end, Being and non-being, something and nothing. For the Daoists, Being and non-being are just two aspects of the inexpressible Dao. Buddhist voidness, on the other hand, is a dynamic whole which evades distinctions. The methodologies of Kōans in Zen and the paradox in Daoism demand an intuitive structure of understanding which assures meaning in the combination of concepts which would otherwise be understood as logically inconsistent. Metaphorical thinking in the Daoist and Buddhist philosophical tradition is not understood as something inferior to conceptual thinking, which is itself put into question, especially in the undertakings, such as the path to certainty. In Japanese Buddhist philosophy, as well as in Daoism, the demand for deontologisation has been strong. The notion of voidness, the central philosophical concept in Buddhism, is precisely the one which tests the nature of various attachments (to the Ego, etc.). Therefore, the demand for discovery of the nature of non-attachment, which forms the basis of certainty, is posed. Certainty, acquired in such a way, opens up new perspectives of existence. When the enlightened one, the one who has reached the basis of certainty, sees everything in the light of voidness, protection against the appearance of ontological entities is established, which then opens up this astonishing realm of suchness of Being. Although this means a temptation, the concept of voidness can neither be brought to the metaphysical level nor reduced to ontology. The voidness, therefore, is not the antithesis to Being, neither is it the position between nothingness and Being. Voidness is transcendence of all standpoints and positions. It provides certainty which leads to the liberation from thinking, and from substantiating the Self and the imprisonment in the Ego.

Within the abundant Pure Land theoretical heritage, Genshin – with his basis of 'amidist' doctrine and the 'ōjōden' texts, legends of a good death – is interesting when treating the problem of certainty. The obsession of having one's life and death under complete control reached its peak with a new genre of descriptions of the people who were certain to have had a good death, i.e., have gone to the Pure Land of Amida to be reborn there. In the imaginative geography, one reaches the model death by passing over the sea of uncertainty, landing in the Pure Land, which is conceptually beyond both hell and heaven. It is an illusion created and transferred beyond one's own death, a dream of a certainty reached in a paradise far away in the West. The moment of death becomes the sole possibility of attainment of the certainty sought for during the entire lifetime.

When analyzing the Pure Land theories of Heaven, we see that in most of them the transcendental voidness is present. The situation, described in the texts as Heaven, is the state of undifferentiated consciousness. Since the language is rooted in the differences, here the void space comes into play. The unusual vision, which might be a product of mystical experience, appears in the spiritual eyes as a vast, limitless space, where things exist in an amorphous, dreamlike mode of existence, always changing and flowing into each other. The Pure Land Heaven can, therefore, be named as the highest point of uncertainty, where everything flows in a dreamlike insecurity and indetermination. The borders and limits are fluid. It is only the veil of illusion (*māyā*) which constitutes the form of language. The primal function of the intellect is that it holds to these mobile and flowing borders, and fixes them into quiet entities. As a result, clearly defined and rigidly fixed distinctions are formed, though these do not correspond to the paradisiacal absence of the formation of meaning. The veil of illusion forms the totality of being and meaning by which, in our minds, the image of so-called reality is formed. This reality, however, is just a surface reality, just a phenomenon, an appearance, a distorted reality of a real unity of reality, which lies at the deepest level, hidden from the eyes of a common human being.

The Buddhist Land of Supreme Bliss,[7] the field of freedom and salvation has no spatial form. According to the Amitābha Sūtra, the land of Supreme Bliss is a world located infinitely far away in the West, reached after passing over one thousand billion lands of Buddhas, and in it dwells the Buddha known as Amitābha, who continues to preach the Law to this day. As seen in the pre-buddhist notions, the earthly paradise of supreme bliss is located in a fixed geographical position on a high mountain at the far end or at the centre of the world, or on an island far out in the ocean. It is a non-place, which does not allow for easy approach, surrounded by walls which cannot be penetrated, walls of ice, a permanent shroud of thick clouds, or blazing flames. But as Shambhala, this paradise, although situated on the same plane as our own world, it cannot be found situated on any map. Why? It slips through the grasp of language.

The image of paradise, as well as the paradisiacal dimension of a free existence itself, are formed on the level of consciousness so well described in the Yoga Sūtra. In contrast with other pre-Buddhist Indian systems that focused exclusively on the cultivation of knowledge as the means to

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[7]Maja Milčinski, "On Approaching Wabi-Sabi," *Inde-Europe-Postmodernité*, ed. Rada Iveković and Jacques Poulain, Paris: Noël Blandin, 1993, 298.

liberation, yoga, while not denying the efficacy of knowledge, advances several ancillary techniques.[8]

The formation of the images of paradise in the strategies of liberation is, therefore, connected with altering the state of consciousness through the use of various physical techniques. It is the state that transcends the *citta-vrtti-nirodha* and is, therefore, indescribable. The popular image of the Amitābha in the Pure Land doctrine, as the one who dwells in the Western Land of Supreme Bliss and as the saviour who will come to rescue all living beings with his overabundance of compassion, is reserved for the devotees who are, due to the Nembutsu[9] practice, bound to the world of being and the realm of language.

5. Mind-Body Concept and Death

In Sino-Japanese philosophical context, however, the certainty is formed with the body, with the transformation of the body into a base for the formation of meaning from which visions of the Pure Land arise, through the use of mental and physical techniques for the visualization of the Land of Supreme Bliss: the land situated in the farthest depths of infinity.

From the early Middle Ages onwards, accounts of rebirth in the Land of Supreme Bliss started to appear in the Japanese philosophical and religious texts. As we have seen, the theory of the Pure Land gives rise to a problem of language and the mind-body theory in Japanese Buddhism. The absence of Ego, the selflessness and the problem of the inexpressible are the effects of the transition to the level of *citta-vrtti-nirodha*. This is the level of *mantra* and of some of the Kōans that slip through the clutches of silence and language – the situation described by Zhuang Zi, and the one which originates and derives from the voidness, as the basis of certainty and *prajñā* or supreme wisdom.

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[8]C. Chapple, "The Unseen Seer and the Field: Consciousness in Saamkhya and Yoga," *The Problem of Pure Consciousness*, ed. Robert K. C. Forman, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990,62-63. While the author presents the five fluctuations (*vrtti*) of the mind (*citta*) as described in the *Yoga Sūtra*, he comes to the conclusion that "for the *yogi*, the goal is to transcend all five by entering the state of *citta-vrtti-nirodha*. Hence, by definition, the practitioner of meditation is entering into a state of being that cannot be described in the same way one would describe conventional sensory or mental experience."

[9]Nembutsu, "Thinking of or Meditating on Buddha," (*buddhaanusmriti* in Sanskrit). It also means "uttering Buddha's Name." In Amidist tradition, it means utterance of Amida's Name, i.e., "*Namu-Amida-Butsu*." See also *The Tanni Shō*, Kyōto: Ryukoku University, 1990, 15.

In the moment of loss of philosophical centrality, we face a radical critique of the long lived dream to attain a foundation of knowledge, certainty and an absolute basis for Truth. The topics discussed above from the Buddhist and Daoist philosophical schools call the rational argumentation itself into question. The obsession about whether or not something could be subsumed under the concept of Truth becomes irrelevant. One of the challenges that we face when approaching the Buddhist and Daoist texts is the problem of language, of the status of words, and of the spheres of silent language and the language of silence in the process of liberation. Language as the indispensable tool of intellect helps to create the distinctions of everything and the borders among the myriad things, which from the viewpoint of the *citta-vrtti-nirodha* are inseparatebly connected in the One. The word, by contrast, is a symbol, a sign of something that has been in the thoughts. The meaning itself is, on the other hand, the symbol of something which is beyond the grasp of logos and is indescribable, inexpressible, certain, since it manifests itself in everything. Here we are dealing with two levels: the surface one, in which reality manifests itself in the form of the ten thousand, myriad things; and the other one, beyond it, the certain one, which is spoken of (or kept silent about) in the sense of the first chapter of the Dao de jing.[10]

The Japanese mind-body concept is based on radical transformation of subjectivity, and with it the notion of rationality and approach to death. The notion of Heaven, as understood and described in the way of transformation of consciousness, demands the opening up of the established governing positions of European metaphysics to deeper dimensions of truth, often related to the trans-rational and trans-linguistic experiences upon which any kind of certainty is grounded. The earlier quoted division of the people into ranks where the lowest is the one who values one's head has implications for the philosopher's interest. Namely, how should one read the autonomous philosophical productions of India, China and Japan from the standpoint of the European traditions which has been called philosophia, the love of wisdom, a discipline that in its development sought in the name of Truth a "pure" starting point, a foundation of Absolute Truth, the ground of certainty. Such undertakings have also in the Buddhist context been brought close to the reflections of Zhuang Zi:

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[10]"As for the Way, the Way that can be spoken of is not the constant Way." Lao-Tzu, *Te-Tao Ching*, trans. R. Henricks, New York: Ballantine Books, 1989, 188.

> The Great Way is not named; Great Discriminations are not spoken; Great Benevolence is not benevolence; Great Modesty is not humble; Great Daring does not attack. If the Way is made clear, it is not the Way. If discriminations are put into words, they do not suffice. If benevolence has a constant object, it cannot be universal. If modesty is fastidious, it cannot be trusted. If daring attacks, it cannot be complete. These five are all round, but they tend toward the square. (All are originally perfect, but may become "squared," i.e., impaired, by the misuses mentioned.)
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> Therefore, understanding that rests in what it does not understand is the finest. Who can understand discriminations that are not spoken, the Way that is not a way? If he can understand this, he may be called the Reservoir of Heaven. Pour into it and it is never full, dip from it and it never runs dry, and yet it does not know where the supply comes from. This is called the Precious Light.[11]

6. Cultivation of Life in Death

Daoism and Buddhism, two of the Asian deontological philosophical traditions, which managed to ask and answer vital philosophical questions, such as the approach to freedom and the acceptance of death, nurtured the cultivation of life, vital energy, principle of becoming and constant change. In the horizon, where nothing is permanent and there is no such thing as substance, the words, concepts, theories or knowledge are transient, as well. The ideas of freedom, truth, certainty and causality, the inquiring into being and substance – the nominal world – was, therefore, not seen as a relevant philosophical preoccupation.

As for the problem of life in death, two of Zhuang Zi's thoughts are vital

> So it is said, with the sage, his life is the working of Heaven, his death the transformation of things... His life is a floating, his death a rest. He does not ponder or scheme, does not plot for the future. A man of light, he does not shine; of good faith, he keeps no promises. He sleeps without dreaming, wakes without worry. His spirit is pure and clean, his soul never wearied. In emptiness, nonbeing, and limpidity, he joins with the Virtue of Heaven.[12]

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[11]The Complete Works of Chuang Tzu, trans. Burton Watson, New York: Columbia University Press, 1968, 44-45.

[12]Chuang-tzu, *The Inner Chapters*, trans. A. C. Graham, London: Unwin Paperbacks, 1981, 168-69.

> Life is the companion of death, death is the beginning of life. Who understands their workings? Man's life is a coming together of breath. If it comes together, there is life; if it scatters, there is death. And if life and death are companions to each other, then what is there for us to be anxious about.[13]

To reach the point where life and death become "unimportant" to us, so that we look upon them with equanimity, we have to dive into the Void. This idea we also meet elsewhere. With the Daoists and in Buddhism, it is not directly connected with the dialogue about Emptiness; instead, the debate is about Dao, Nothingness, the search for truth, and the meaning of life and death. At the beginning of all these quests, the illusion of a stable Ego that continues on and on appears as an obstacle. Around this illusion, a system of categorizing phenomena builds up, trapping a person in stereotyped evaluations of things and events.

The Daoists and Buddhists teach us about something close to Meister Eckhart's "*Abgescheidenheit*" (or "*Abgeschiedenheit*"),[14] translated as "detachment," but might be explained with the sense of separation, objectivity, self-reliance, equanimity. Some would describe this as a complete standstill, freedom, rest in oneself; to be with oneself in the soul, in regard to the people and the world to remain withdrawn.

However, this state is not the same as that practised by a stoic who has withdrawn from life and is keeping himself far from the reach of any emotion, joy or suffering. "The detached person," according to Meister Eckhart, is the way Jesus Christ was able to live his passion in complete detachment. He was able to live, suffer and rejoice while remaining detached (*ledig*) from everyday outer reality. In the same way we do not deny reality as it is offered to us, but accept it with a certain reserve not in tune with Ecclesiastes' pessimism, namely when he gives his toast to the young, encouraging them to take joy in life, he darkens this very stimulative passus with the perspective that one has to pay for the joys:

> Rejoice, young man, while you are young, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth. Follow the inclination of your heart and the desire of your eyes, but know that for all these things God will bring you into judgement.[15]

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[13]Chuang-tzu, *The Inner Chapters*, 235.

[14]Maître Eckhart, *Du détachement et autres textes*, ed. J. Laborriere, Paris: Payot, 1995.

[15]Ecclesiastes 11:9.

He remains bitter to the end of his life. The joys of life are darkened in advance with the perspective of death and final judgement after it. Since he was not able to accept the endless cycle of life and impermanence, the one that has been so clearly described by Rabindranath Tagore: "... And because I love this life, I know I shall love death as well. The child cries out when from the right breast the mother takes it away, in the very next moment to find in the left one its consolation."[16]

As the texts quoted above teach us, when death approaches one has to perceive it as unimportant, as well, and give in. We can borrow the illustration of this phase in human life from the final days of Socrates as described in Plato's *Phaidon*. When accused by the traditional, conservative stream in Athens in 399 BC, it is obvious from his defense that his attitude is to let himself be killed and thereby fulfill his last mission.[17] That was the door into Freedom, the Essential – the Real – and all that for which he was striving in his life. However, he did deny suicide and kept to the notions of orphics and Pythagoreans that the people should be like guardians in life, and never leave the place until we are dismissed. His attitude was that one should not kill oneself until God notifies him, which was the situation that he himself was in. It is time to die – that was also what his inner voice (*daimonion*) had been telling him.

One of the most important Japanese Buddhist philosophers, Dōgen Kigen (1200-1253), has developed his theoretical insights on the basis of the daily practice of *zazen*. In his philosophy, birth and death (*shōji*) are understood as the first and the last of the four sufferings (birth, ageing, illness, and death) which are common to all sentient beings, which are able to experience suffering.

7. Conclusion

The negation of the ontological doctrine of the ego in Buddhism and the Daoist techniques that are supposed to bring one into real connection with the vital sources of the universe by transcending one's limitations, are two notorious ways of liberation in the vast tradition of Asian philosophies. The ways of achieving freedom in Daoist and Buddhist philosophical traditions discussed above can teach us about the illusions of the superiority of philosophical speculation as understood in the Judeo-Christian-Greek heritage.

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[16]R. Tagore, *Gitanjali*, London: Macmillan, 1913, 87.

[17]R. Guardini, *Der Tod des Sokrates*, Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1958, 171.

> Lao Tzu said, "Ah-the basic rule of life-preservation. Can you embrace the One? Can you keep from losing it? Can you, without tortoise shell or divining stalks, foretell fortune and misfortune? Do you know where to stop, do you know where to leave off? Do you know how to disregard it in others and instead look for it in yourself? Can you be brisk and unflagging? Can you be rude and unwitting? Can you be a little baby? The baby howls all day, yet its throat never gets hoarse – harmony at its height! The baby makes fists all day, yet its fingers never get cramped – virtue is all it holds to. The baby stares all day without blinking its eyes – it has no preferences in the world of externals. To move without knowing where you are going, to sit at home without knowing what you are doing, traipsing and trailing about with other things, riding along with them on the same wave – this is the basic rule of life-preservation, this and nothing more... The Perfect Man joins with others in seeking his food from the earth, his pleasures in Heaven. But he does not become embroiled with them in questions of people and things, profit and loss. He does not join them in their shady doings, he does not join them in their plots, he does not join them in their projects. Brisk and unflagging, he goes; rude and unwitting, he comes. This is what is called the basic rule of life-preservation... The baby acts without knowing what it is doing, moves without knowing where it is going. Its body is like the limb of a withered tree, its mind like dead ashes. Since it is so, no bad fortune will ever touch it, and no good fortune will come to it either. And if it is free from good and bad fortune, then what human suffering can it undergo?"[18]

In the above described examples of Japanese and Chinese ecologies of mind their approach towards death-life is important. It is the consciousness of our own transience that brings us to the field of action. How to function in our optimal way and still practice the deep awareness of our own impermanence that is the only topos of our absolute freedom. It is enlightened self-interest that enables us to achieve the unity with our inner and outer environment and between mind and body.

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[18]Guardini, *Der Tod des Sokrates*, 253-5.

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TORAH TEACHES: "EVERYTHING IS VERY GOOD"

Allen S. Maller♦

1. Introduction

Some people are optimistic and some others are pessimistic. Some are hopeful and positive while some are despairing and negative about life and everything that surrounds it. A basic teaching of Judaism is that optimism, hope, and positive outlook are *Mitsvot* (Jewish religious duties). The natural world is neither fundamentally a place of suffering, pain, cruelty and sorrow, nor is the human world basically evil: a community filled with lust, violence and greed. Nature is good. Human society or history is improvable. Each individual's personal world can be good and improvable if he or she makes it so. Here are three examples of Jewish teachings of positive affirmation applied to nature, personal psychology, and a vision of historical development.

2. Nature and Goodness

The first chapter of the biblical book of Genesis describes God's creation of the universe in seven stages (days). Six times the Torah (first five books of the Bible) reports God's evaluation of the stages of creation, "God saw that 'X' was good" (1:4, 1:10, 1:12, 1:18, 1:21, and 1:26). After the creation of human beings the Torah says: "God saw everything He had made and beheld it was very good" (1:31). What makes this stage of creation "very good"?

According to the Rabbis, with the creation of human beings, God introduced into our world creatures with free will. But, in order for them to choose, God had to create both positive and negative realities to provide for their choices: good and evil, reward and punishment, happiness and suffering, birth and death, co-operation and competition, etc. Since Judaism teaches that people are basically good, most people will use their

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free will to make positive choices most of the time. Thus, even with the introduction of negative forces and elements into the world, everything will be 'very good' because a 'good' world lacking creatures who can exercise free will is not that good.

Most of the teachings of Rabbinic Judaism from the 1st to the 6th centuries are gathered together in the Talmud or in various Midrash collections. In the Midrash Rabbah to Genesis chapter 9 there are a number of glosses of what makes the world 'very good'. Most of the interpretations involve the introduction of a negative or challenging aspect of life. So Rabbi Samuel ben Rabbi Isaac says 'very good' alludes to the angel of life vis-à-vis the angel of death. The joy of children and grandchildren is much greater than the inevitability of illness and death (which is sometimes also a cure for painful decay). The fact that we will get old, infirm and then die does not negate or overwhelm all the joys in life: a limited life teaches us to do good *now*.

Rabbi Simeon ben Lakish holds that 'very good' refers to a kingdom of heaven and a kingdom of earth. The material world does not contradict, subvert or negate a spiritual holy life. The material world does give us the opportunity to make ordinary things holy. According to Rabbi Huna, 'very good' refers to happiness and suffering. You can't have one without the other. Better to love and suffer a loss than not to love at all. In the same way Rabbi Simeon ben Abba opines that 'very good' refers to God's bounty and to God's punishment (i.e., moral acts should have consequences in this world). Further, Rabbi Ze'ira says: 'very good' refers to Paradise and Purgatory (i.e., moral acts also should have consequences in the world to come).

All of these Rabbis, thus, point to different aspects of human experience to illustrate the idea that the negative aspects of reality do not determine what reality really is. They are not the norms but the challenges necessary to enable us to have free choice. By choosing to do good we make the world 'very good'. Indeed, many of our wild inclinations that can lead us into evil can also, if they are tamed by Torah's moral discipline lead us to great achievements. Thus, Rabbi Samuel says: 'good' refers to the inclination toward good and very good refers to the inclination toward evil. Can the inclination toward evil be very good? Yes! If not for the inclination toward evil no man would build a house, marry, or beget children as it says, "excelling in work is due to a man's rivalry with his neighbour" (Eccl. 4:4).

The Rabbis understood that life would be easier without temptation. They also realized that without trials and temptations we would not grow beyond our inner capacities. Thus, Satan – the tempter – is described in the book of Job as an angel/agent of God. (Job 1:6). Without opportunity and temptation to sin we would not have the ability to choose good. For, as God tells Cain, the first murderer, "Sin crouches at the doorway" (Genesis 4:7). We always have a choice. Rivalry and competition can lead to excelling or to destroying. The "evil" impulse (*yetzer*) is not inherently evil, but if untamed by a moral code (e.g., Torah) it easily leads us to do evil. Sex with love and marriage is good. Sex without love and marriage is not good. So also, extramarital sex or forced sex is evil. Our biology is simply the *Yetzer* or the *yetzer haRah* (the evil/wild impulse). Our *yetzer HaTov* (the good/tamed impulse) is our morally learned response that makes us into creatures in the Image of God. God sometimes does not favour us in order to challenge us and, thus, to grow stronger in taming our wild infantile urges.

We are not told why God favoured Abel, and not Cain. It is not important because throughout life we will have to deal with failure and rejection. Often we succeed in love, in business, in sports, etc., and sometimes we fail or are rejected. Cain deals with rejection by blaming and killing his rival. Cain takes his rejection as a personal insult. If Cain was more enlightened he could react dispassionately and avoid hatred and murder. Even better, by suffering how defeat and loss could be beneficial, Cain could try another offering, or another time, or another way.

Many people think that nature is loaded with harmful and annoying creatures. In opposition to this view we find the statement "Very good refers to all those creatures deemed unnecessary and useless in this world like flies, gnats, etc., who have their allotted task in the scheme of creation (Midrash Exodus Rabbah). In opposition to those who saw woman as a major source of defilement, sin, or the cause for original sin there is the statement "Very good refers to the creation of women," i.e., an anti-celibacy and anti-misogynist view (Midrash on Psalms).

In opposition to the view that renunciation of the pleasures of this world is the best way to elevate one spiritually there is the statement "Very good indicates that God did not procrastinate but ecstatically enjoyed creation immediately for God took pride and pleasure in creation" (Midrash Tanhuma). Thus, God is both an effective creator, and a joyful, enthusiastic, and proud creator.

3. Personal Psychology and Positive Affirmation

That creation is good is clear. But it is also clear that all people lose people they love to death. This is painful and sorrowful. Also all people fear serious illness and their own death. It is true that in our generation many elderly people look forward to death as a cure for decrepitude, chronic pain, and infirmity. It is also true that advances in medical care have reduced greatly the frequency of early death. Today, issues of depression, anxiety, frustration, and purposelessness create misery for an increasing number of people. Training people to view their own life positively is increasingly important.

One way of influencing people to think positively about their lives is to teach them the importance of saying blessings for the many things they experience, both in their ordinary daily and weekly life, and at occasional extraordinary times. It is a *Mitsvah* (Jewish religious duty) to say blessings at every meal over food and drink. Every morning when we awake it is a *Mitsvah* to say several blessings because various parts of our mind and body still work. During daily prayer there are 18 blessings, and there are blessings for the weekly celebration of the Sabbath. There are also blessings to say for special occasions, for our sages urge us to thank God for as many blessings as we can, since the more blessings one can say, the more blessed one becomes. Indeed, Jewish tradition maintains that everyone who is able to say 100 blessings a day is truly blessed. Among the special occasion blessings, there is a blessing for seeing a non-Jewish sage and another one for seeing a Jewish sage. There is a blessing for hearing good news and another one for hearing bad news in accordance with Rabbi Huna's view that we need both joy and suffering to experience 'very good'. Here are a few examples of blessings for special occasions:

Special Occasion	Blessing
On beholding fragrant trees	"Praised be Adonai our God, Ruler of space and time, creator of fragrant trees."
On seeing trees in blossom	"Praised be Adonai our God, Ruler of space and time, whose world lacks nothing we need, who has fashioned 'goodly' creatures and lovely trees that enchant the heart."

On seeing an unusual looking person	"Praised be Adonai our God, Ruler of space and time, who makes every person unique."
On seeing a large number of people	"Praised be Adonai our God, Ruler of space and time, the wise one of secrets, for just as no person's opinion is like that of another, so their faces are different from one another."
On seeing evidence of charitable efforts	"Praised be Adonai our God, ruler of space and time, who clothes the naked."
On seeing people who overcome adversity	"Praised be Adonai our God, ruler of space and time, who gives strength to the weary."

Understanding that suffering, sorrow and even death do not nullify the basic goodness of the world God has created, and training ourselves to see all the blessings that surround us, are two of the many ways the Torah tradition in Judaism teaches Jews to have a positive and optimistic view of both the natural world and the human world we live in. But, although individuals can train themselves to make their lives joyful and holy, some would say that civilization has corrupted the world of nature with sin, lust, greed, violence and immorality. It is true that prior to the creation of self-conscious moral creatures the world was free of evil. However, at that time the world also lacked good for there were no creatures who could choose to do good and not evil (Angels in Jewish thought have no free will and are, thus, inferior to humans.) It is possible to think of nature as always pure and modern civilization as always a corrupting influence. Indeed, this seems to be a popular view among many Western ecology activists.

4. Influence of Human History

A third important Jewish teaching concerns the outcome of human history. Most ancient philosophies saw human history as cyclical. Others saw the cycle as a declining one, with each age followed by a more degenerate one. The present age was often considered to be dire and always getting worse. The Prophets of Israel (from the 10th century to the 5th century BCE), especially Isaiah, introduced God's assurance of a Messianic Age to come

when all nations would achieve all-enveloping peace, prosperity, and justice.

How can people, especially Jews, believe in a Messianic Age after all that the world went through in the 20th century? It is true that human society changed more rapidly, violently and fundamentally in the last century than ever before in history. While doctors saved the lives of millions, dictators sacrificed the lives of millions. Populations exploded and birth rates declined. Technology produced both worldwide prosperity and poverty at the same time. Knowing all this, how can we look upon the future with optimistic hope? Are we – along with the entire world and our society – heading towards a wonder-filled new age, or a doomsday; or else, are they both occurring concurrently because breakdown is always a prelude to breakthrough? Many who believe in the Biblical vision of a Messianic Age use the insights of the Prophets of Israel to provide guidance in understanding the social, economic, scientific and cultural upheavals sweeping the society. Usually it is the dramatic dangers of the pre-Messianic tribulation that are being emphasized. I will focus more on some positive signs developing throughout the world that accord with a positive Messianic vision of the Jewish Prophets.

In most religious traditions, redemption is defined in terms of individual enlightenment or personal salvation. However, the Prophets of Israel conceived redemption as a transformation of human society that would occur through the catalystic transformation of the Jewish community. This transformation, which will take place in this world at some future time, is called the Messianic Age. The transition to the Messianic Age is called the birth pangs of the Messiah. The birth of a redeemed messianic world may be the result of an easy or difficult labour. If all would simply live according to the moral teachings of their religious traditions, they would themselves bring about the Messianic Age. But, if they would not do it voluntarily, it would come through social and political upheavals, worldwide conflicts and generation gaps. The Messiah refers to an agent of God who helps bring about this transformation. The Jewish tradition teaches that this agent of God (and there may be two or three such agents) will be a human being, a descendant of King David, with great leadership qualities similar to Moses or Mohammed. The arrival of the Messianic Age is what's really important, not the personality of the agents who bring it about, since they are simply the instruments of God, who ultimately is the real Redeemer.

The Messianic Age is usually seen as the solution to all of humanity's basic problems. This may be true in the long run but the vast changes the transition to the Messianic Age entails will provide challenges to society for many generations to come. For twenty-five centuries Jews have prayed for the day when Isaiah's vision of a radically new world in which Jerusalem would be fulfilled with joy for "no more shall there be in it an infant that lives only a few days" (65:20). Before the mid-19th century, the annual death rate for humans fluctuated from year to year but always remained high, between 30 and over 50 deaths per 1,000 individuals. Infectious and parasitic diseases primarily caused those elevated and unstable rates. The toll from disease among the young was especially high. Almost 1/3 of the children born in any year died before their first birthday; in some subgroups, half died. Because childbirth was hazardous, mortality among pregnant women was also high. A century ago, the infant mortality rate in Jerusalem (as in most of the world) was 25-30%. Now it is less than 1%. For thousands of years almost every family in the world suffered the loss of at least one or two infants; now it happens to less than one out of a hundred.

If this radical improvement had occurred over a few years, it would have greatly impressed people. But since it occurred gradually over several generations, people take it for granted. Also, it seems to be part of human nature that most people focus on complaining about the less than 1% that still die (an individual family tragedy heightened by the fact that it is unexpected because it is so rare) rather than be grateful that the infant mortality rate has been reduced by over 95%.

Also, people are quick to point out that as a result of the great reduction in the infant mortality rate, the world's population has expanded tremendously, which is, and will continue causing major social and economic problems in non-Western societies. The answer to this problem is birth control, which has already radically affected birth rates in Europe, North America, and Japan. For example, in Japan the number of children born in a woman's lifetime declined from 4.72 in 1930, to 2.13 in 1970, to 1.29 in 2003, a 75% decline. Sixty-four of the world's nations now have birth rates lower than the 2.1 children per woman required to keep a population stable. In another generation or two, populations will be declining throughout the world. Since that will occur in the future, and since we are suffering the negative consequences of over population now, very few people see the whole transformation as a Messianic one in spite

of the fact that it is a fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy. Finally, the great increase in the number of people who live long enough to become "elders" provides us with a new set of challenges (a 5-10 year increase in life expectancy is bad news for pension plans and good news for healthcare workers).

Initially, decrease in infant, child and maternal death rates makes the population younger by expanding the base of the age pyramid. Yet, that improvement in survival, along with social and economic development, leads to a drop in birth rates and the beginning of a population with a disproportionately increasing percentage of elderly people. In 1900 there were 10-17 million people at age 65 or older, making up 6.2% of the world population. By the year 2050, people over 65 will number at least 2.5 billion – about 1/5 of the world's projected population. Barring catastrophes that raise death rates substantially or a huge inflation in birth rates, the human population will achieve an age composition within our children's lifetime, which will be absolutely unique in human history. These improvements in human health are unprecedented in human history. Truly, we will be coming close to Isaiah's prophecy: "One who dies at 100 years shall be reckoned a youth, and one who fails to reach 100 shall be reckoned accursed" (65:20). Such radical changes will necessitate major changes in the way we think and act when faced with decisions about life and death. Yet who among us would want to return to the high mortality rates and early deaths of previous centuries? The challenges we now face are not those of survival, but of opportunity.

Where does a Messiah fit in with all of this? He will still have lots to do when he arrives. Most Orthodox Jews would not commit themselves to any individual as a Messiah unless he successfully rebuilds the ancient Temple in Jerusalem, fulfilling the prophecy of Zachariah, "He shall build the Temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the glory, he shall sit on the throne and rule, there shall be a priest before the throne, and peaceful counsel will exist between both of them" (6:13). Now that a large part of the Jewish people have returned to the Land of Israel, and resurrected a Jewish State, one might think that rebuilding a temple of the site where Solomon originally built one almost 3,000 years ago, would be relatively simple. It would, except for the fact that a Muslim Shrine, The Dome of the Rock, presently occupies the site. Often erroneously called the Mosque of Omar, it is not a mosque and was not built by Omar. It was built in 691 by Abd-Al-Malik and is regarded by Muslims as the third

holiest site in the world. Any attempt to replace the Dome of the Rock would provoke a Muslim Holy War of cataclysmic proportions.

There is, however, a lot of vacant land on the Temple Mount, and a Jewish house of worship could be built adjacent to the Dome of the Rock provided the Muslims would cooperate. Most observers agree that anyone who could arrange such Jewish-Muslim cooperation would really be the Messianic Ruler of Peace (Isaiah 9:5). Christian support for such a cooperative venture would also be important. Anyone who can bring Jews, Christians and Muslims together in mutual respect and cooperation would surely fulfil the greatest of all Messianic predictions: "They shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning knives; nation shall not take up sword against nation, they shall never again teach war" (Isaiah 2:4). Indeed, such Jewish/Christian/ Muslim cooperation would not be possible without great spiritual leadership in all three communities. Thus, each community could consider its leadership to be the Messiah and this would fulfil the culminating verses of Isaiah's Messianic prophecy as enlarged upon by Micah, "They shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning knives. Nation shall not take up sword against nation, they shall never again teach war, but every man shall sit under his grapevine or fig tree with no one to disturb him. For, it is the Lord of Hosts who spoke. Though all peoples walk each in the name of its God, we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever" (4:3-5). If each people truly follows the best of its own religious teachings the Messiah will surely have arrived, and God's Kingdom will be established. This is the most optimistic and positive vision one can have and one that we can all work for together.

5. Conclusion

Hope and trust in God are very important components of Jewish teaching. Personal hope is strengthened by the exercise of saying dozens of blessings every day. Also important is being constantly aware of the challenges and obstacles that are not interruptions in our path; instead they constitute an integral part in our path. Finally, belief in a future Messianic Age prevents one from becoming cynical and resigned about the problems of community and humanity. All of these Torah teachings help explain why Jews in the 19th and 20th century have been disproportionately over involved in every major movement in Europe and America to improve the state of society and advance human improvement.

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LIFE AND HEALING PROCESSES IN URHOBO MEDICINE

John Ubrurhe♦

1. Introduction

In all cultures, man is the centrepiece of the cultural phenomena. Conco has defined culture as an "abstraction which encompasses the total way of life of a society. It is the precipitate of a group expressing its adaptation to the physical environment."[1] Briefly defined, therefore, culture is the totality of man's way of life.

Culture evolves in human life, which assumes a central role in the all-encompassing cultural patterns in the context of the African belief system. The aim of this paper, therefore, is to examine the Urhobo concept of life and the means of preserving it. It will also investigate Urhobo comprehension of health, the multidimensional factors responsible for its diminution and Urhobo therapeutic methods of restoring, preserving and enhancing life. Since Urhobo traditional medicine is practised in a dynamic society, the paper argues that in order to meet the medical needs and aspirations of the people, the medical system must have a touch of science and technology.

2. God as Life-Giving Creator

God is the creator of human beings and He reveals himself to them in various cultures in different ways. This self-disclosure is universal. This is why Ezea remarked that all nations have the consciousness of God, which is the revelation of Himself to humans. The varying consciousness of God in all cultures is expressed by the various names with which they address Him. Thus, the Urhobo call Him Oghene, Yoruba Olodumare, Igbo Chukwu, Bini Osanobua, the cognate of *Osonobruhwe*, the Urhobo praise

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[1]W. Z. Conco, "The African Bantu Traditional Practice of Medicine: Some Preliminary Observations," *African Therapeutic Systems*, eds., Z. A. Ademuwagun, et al., Massachusetts: Cross Road Press, 1979, 58.

name for Oghene; the Izon call Him Tamara and the Itsekiri Oritse. All these names depict Him as the Supreme Being and creator of everything, both animate and inanimate.

Myths abound in various cultural and religious traditions, which relate the creative activities of the Supreme Being. In fact, the myths of the Yoruba and Igbo have become paradigms. In the Bini creative myths, the uniqueness of Osanobua is well articulated in the attempt of Olokun, the archdivinity of the Bini pantheon and son of Osanobua to challenge his father in the attributes of splendour and majesty. On the appointed day, it is said, Osanobua sent his messenger to Olokun to meet him at the appointed place – the market square. Olokun wore his best regalia and came out to inform his father's messenger that he was ready. But to his acute mortification, the messenger wore the same dress with him. Olokun changed his regalia three times but in each occasion, he discovered that the messenger wore the same dress. He, finally, realized that he could not compete with his father, Osanobua. The messenger, however, was no other person than the chameleon.[2]

The Urhobo counterpart does not differ dramatically from the Bini's. Ohwo (Man) wanted to be creator, as Oghene, by creating a lifeless form of man. He made various attempts to give life to it but he could not. Oghene came and saw man in this inert state. Oghene stood it up and breathed on it, thus, imparting life to it. Oghene, thus, demonstrated his uniqueness of being the only one who could give life.[3] This accounts for the non-existence of images representing Him. He is not within the rank and file of the divinities who are contingent upon him while He exists absolutely on His own power. This relationship between God and the divinities is well illustrated by the Yoruba myth which narrates the conspiracy of all the one thousand and seven hundred divinities against Olodumare. They demanded that Olodumare should hand over power and authority to them so that they would govern the world for sixteen years. Olodumare, the omniscient God, suggested sixteen experimental days; for He knew that no life could survive without Him. The divinities accepted this arrangement and set on their task of governance. By the eighth day, the machinery of the universe had grounded to a halt and, finally,

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[2]E. B. Idowu, *African Traditional Religion: A Definition*, London: SCM Press, 1973, 152.

[3]Interview with Pa Iyoyo (age 110) of Abraka, 4 April 1992.

collapsed. The story concludes with Olodumare laughing at their folly and forgiving them. The Benevolent Father and King *par excellence* switched everything on to life again and the entire system began functioning normally and immediately.[4] The Urhobo axiom that "*Omo v' Ose roye vwavwa osho-o*" (meaning, "a son cannot measure his penis with his father's") portrays the unique life giving power of Oghene which the divinities do not possess.

From the above analysis, it is tacit that life is the greatest gift of God to man. While in nearly all creative myths other creatures are depicted as emanating from God or from the creative functions God delegated to his functionaries, God has had a more intimate relationship with human being than any other creature. The Genesis myth (chapters 1 and 2) supports the belief that God alone is the author of life. It evinces life as the spark of God in a human being: "Let us create man in our own image." In African belief system, man is made up of three component parts: the body (*soma*), personality soul (*psyche*), and spirit or the motivating breath of life (*pneuma*). The pneuma is described as a non-physical and immortal entity in human nature.[5] It departs from the *soma* at death.[6] Man lives a fulfilling life when all these component parts are working harmoniously. This harmonious co-existence is possible only if the gods and other spiritual beings in his environment are favourably disposed. Thus, it is held that life of human beings depends on the whims and caprices of these gods and spirits. They, therefore, have to placate the gods constantly to win their favour. Thus, human beings are said to live a precarious life.[7] African belief system, in general, holds that the divinities have dominion over human beings. But over all other created beings, both animate and inanimate, human being alone has authority; for, God said:

> Let him (human being) have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth (Genesis 1:26-31).

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[4]E. B. Idowu, *Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief*, London: Longman, 1968, 41.

[5]O. U. Kalu, ed., "Precarious Vision: The African Perception of His World," *African Cultural Development*, Enugu: Fourth Dimension, 1982, 41.

[6]G. E. Okeke, "The Interpretation of New Testament Teaching on Death and Future Life in an African Context," *Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis*, Department of Religion, U. N. Nsukka, 1981, 10.

[7]Kalu, "Precarious Vision," 42.

This central position of human beings in the context of the African ontology has enabled Afrel (the acronym of African Traditional Religion) to be described as anthropocentric. This implies that Afrel is centred on human beings. Thus, the gods and other beings exist because of them. Anderson has also argued that the human being is the essence of the almighty intelligence which guides and controls the universe, and that he/she does not only live in the intelligence but also part of it and the whole of it. This intelligence, he argues, is for the human being to use as he/she sees fit.[8]

3. The Urhobo Concept of Life

The Urhobo believe that life is the greatest gift from *Oghene* and it belongs to him alone. All efforts are geared towards its maintenance, preservation, and enhancement. The sacredness of life is portrayed by the stringent sanctions imposed against its elimination. Nobody has the right to shed human blood except in war. Even in war, the warrior must undergo special purification rites without which he would face serious consequences. It is believed that nobody can commit murder without being caught because the spirit of the victim is believed to haunt the murderer. Hence, during war in those days if one were to kill an enemy, he would decapitate the victim and suck the blood. By sucking the blood, he was believed to enter into pact with the spirit. Back at home, the warrior would undergo a purification rite, according to which he had to stay outside, sleep on refuse dump and eat from coconut shell for seven days.[9]

The African concept of man as *imago Dei* presupposes a deliberate and concerted effort to preserve, restore and enhance life. As Tempel rightly points out, "Life belongs to God. It is He who summons it into being, strengthens and preserves it."[10] The Ashanti's belief is that when God brings illness he also provides medicine to cure it. Rattray attests to the supremacy of life,[11]and holds that medicine is one of the means of preserving, strengthening and enhancing life.

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[8]U. S. Anderson, *Three Magic Words*, California: Wilshire Book Co., 1954, 8.

[9]J. O. Ubrurhe, "A Functional Approach to the Study of Taboos: A Case Study of Urhobo Traditional Society," *Unpublished M. A. Thesis*, Nigeria: U. N. Nsukka, 1986, 98.

[10]P. Tempel, *Bantu Philosophy*, Paris: Presence Africans, 1978, 78.

[11]R. S. Rattray, *Religion and Art in Ashanti*, London: Clarendon Press, 1927, 165.

4. The Urhobo Concept of Health and Illness

Health and happiness are the most important desires of humans and these, not doubt, have proved elusive. Throughout the ages many researches have been conducted and yet enduring health and healing are still enigmatic. The significant position of health is well articulated by Hippocrates, the acclaimed father of modern medicine when he stated: "A wise man should consider that health is the greatest of human blessings."[12] It was in an attempt to stifle disease which consequently brought pain that different healing processes have evolved in different cultures; for, illness and its healing process are deeper existential problems of human beings, problems that haunt the humankind universally in an unprecedented way, thereby leaving us all in gruelling tension amid hope and despondency.[13]

Health, which is defined as "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity,"[14] according to the World Health Organisation in 1946, is the primary concern of the Urhobo. Health is preferable to wealth, and, hence, the Urhobo axim says "*Omakpokpo ne efe*" (that is, "Good health is priceless"). The Urhobo man would rather suffer and remain in abject poverty in order to maintain and live a positive and sustained state of health. The Urhobo say: "*Oma kpokpo eye Ose r'ohwo*" ("Health is man's lover"), because a healthy person is an asset to the community. He/she will not only contribute meaningfully to the development and growth of the society but also will keep the societal laws and regulations. Conversely, a sickly person retards progress, and accelerates societal insecurity and deprivation. So, the Urhobo, like all other Africans, leave no stone unturned to seek and acquire health.

Health and healing are fundamental themes of life and are the most important values in Africa. Sickness or disease in the Urhobo perception is a diminution of life, a threat posed to life. Thus, petition for health is the most common subject in prayer.[15] Lartey, in emphasizing the significance of health and healing, attributed the formation and growth of Independent

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[12]*The Watchtower*, August 16, 1991, 4.

[13]Jan-Martin Berentsen, "Opening Address to a Seminar on Healing Ministry," *Journal of Mission Theology* 1, 1 (1991), 2.

[14]D. C. Silles, *International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, vols. 5 & 6, New York: Macmillan Co. and the Free Press, 1972, 330.

[15]A. Shorter, *Prayers in the Religious Tradition of Africa*, Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1975, 60.

Indigenous Pentecostal Churches in Africa to the failure of the Western Mission founded churches to integrate charismatic experience, especially in the area of healing, into their faith and practice.[16] He argues that healing, exorcism, divination, diagnosis and the restoration to wholeness of ill or disturbed persons are the crucial functions of a priest. He adds: to the African, the most important function of a priest is the medical one – the ability to diagnose correctly and to prescribe accurate remedies for various diseases. He further opines that the medical function is inseparable from his other priestly activities. The failure to accept this as a valid service of a religious person, he claims, is to seriously detract from a priest's acceptability and recognition by a traditional African.

Lartey has overstated his case by attributing healing to priest-healers. The import of his statement is that all priests in Africa are involved in the traditional medical system and that it is their main function. It is germane that some priests are healers but their main function is not medical. Hence, Metuh says that in Africa the role and status of a priest depend largely on the effectiveness and popularity of the divinity and how effectively he executes his intermediary function.[17] Lartey, by imputing the most important activity of an African priest to the medical one, has, no doubt, discredited the African acceptability and recognition of priest *qua* priest with a traditional African. Thus, the main function of a priest is that of a mediator and intermediary between Deity\deity and man and not medical as Lartey had held.

The Urhobo perception of the aetiology of disease is of tripartite dimensions.[18] Briefly, they are the natural/physical, mystical/preter-natural and supernatural causations. The causes of natural diseases depend on cause-and-effect theory. The remedies can be subjected to laboratory tests\analyses and the active principles discovered. The treatment is rational since no rituals are involved.

Supernatural diseases are caused by witches, sorcerer and evil eyes of enemies while the divinities and ancestors are responsible for mystical diseases. Mystical diseases arise mainly from breakdown in filial

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[16]E. I. Lartey, "Healing: Tradition and Pentecostalism in Africa Today," *International Review of Mission* 85, 297 (January 1985), 156.

[17]E. I. Metuh, *African Religions in Western Conceptual Schemes*, Ibadan: Pastoral Institute, 1985, 156.

[18]J. O. Ubrurhe, "Rituals and Their Efficacy in Urhobo Medicine," *Humanitas* 3, 1 (June 1992), 92.

relationships consequent on the failure of a victim to perform his obligation to the ancestors and/or the infringement of family moral code. Divinities are believed to cause diseases if the votary breaks any of its taboos or in the wake of a failure to maintain purity before or during ceremonial rites. The characteristics of supernaturally and mystically caused diseases include seriousness, protractedness and their inability to respond to the whole gamut of proven efficacious remedies.

The above aetiology of disease incidentally determines the types of diseases in Urhobo. Natural diseases are known as *iphori* or *ogaye* (female disease) while mystical and supernatural diseases are called *ogashare* (male disease). Thus, the mystical and supernatural diseases require psychometry to ferret the root causes. These categories of disease require different therapeutic processes in Urhobo medicine. There are basically eight therapeutics methods. Mume has noted that Nigeria has the highest variety of therapies and that these have placed Nigerian medicine in a superior position to any other country's traditional medicine, but here I intend to restrict the present discussion to herbalism, massage, hydrotherapy, fasting, and faith healing.[19]

5. Urhobo Therapeutic Processes: Herbalism

It is the treatment of ailment through the use of herbs. Herbs and other vegetable remedies form about 90%, hence the name Herbalist Therapy.[20] In some cases, parts of animals, insects and so on may be included. Herbalism is one of the oldest forms of therapy. Its origin is coeval with the evolution of mankind. The Bible also affirms the use of herbal remedies. For instance, God said to Adam: "From every tree in the garden you must eat to satisfaction" (Genesis 2:16) while Ecclesiasticus 38:1-15 puts it thus:

> Honour the physician with the honour due to him ... for the Lord created him; for healing comes from the Most High... The Lord created medicines from the earth, and a sensible man will not despise them.

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[19]J. O. Mume, *Tradomedicalism: What It Is*, Agbarho: JOM Nature Cure Centre, n.d., 49.

[20]G. Bibeau, E. Corin, et al., *Traditional Medicine in Zaria: Present and Potential Contribution to the Health Series*, International Development Research Centre, 1980, 17.

Urhobo herbal medicines display some mystical forces. For instance, there are some that possess occultic strength, some are *ifue* (antidotes) which counteract diseases that are supernaturally caused; some *umu-use* can be telepathically directed to summon a missing person, a run-away from a distance; *oyeregbone* or *oyoriwe* assists in the extraction of bullets or thorns from the body without any operation. *Ekpofia* is used to divert bullets from their target; mere chewing of *umuokpo* renders the user cutlass or sharp instrument proof. *Elephia* renders the user invulnerable to enemy's attack. The enemy cannot raise his hand to fight the user while *umuora*; *umu ro_sie ihori ne ora* is a natural antiseptic which renders sores or fracture non-septic or it removes or kills worms from suppurated sores.

Herbal antiseptics have advantage over the Fleming type of treatment – the use of antibiotics and synthetic drugs. Herbal antiseptics not only heal the body but also assist in the building up of new cells. Antibiotics, on the other hand, by killing the microorganism, destroy the cells and the white blood corpuscles, which fight against microbes in the body. Hence, modern medical doctors advise the use of vitamin B complex together with antibiotics.

There has been a call to move from the use of synthetic drugs to Galenical treatment and to the use of medicinal plants. African medicine that was hitherto denied of its efficacy (some of the medicinal plants and their remedies) has been proved efficacious.

6. Massage

Massaging as a therapeutic system is very effective in the treatment of ailments of the nervous, muscular, osseous systems and, especially, for treating gynaecological problems and man's temporary impotency. Urhobo call it *Omewhoro*. The whole armamentarium of the masseur is the physical manipulation of muscles, joints and veins on the nude skin in a technical manner. In most cases, massage treatment may be applied to relax the muscles and veins and to allow circulation of blood. It is very effective for restoring potency in cases of impotency arising from overworking of the body, too much thinking, and the onset of old age. Massage aids the stimulation of muscles, joints and veins and allows circulation of blood. It is based on the physiology and anatomy of the human body.

7. Hydro-Therapy

Hydrotherapy is the application of water of different forms and temperature for the treatment of ailments. Both the practitioner and those who have gone through the treatment procedures realize its curative value.

By regularising circulation of the blood in various systems of the body, hydrotherapy increases muscular tone and nerve force, improves nutrition and digestion, thereby increasing the activity of the respiratory glands. Hydrotherapy facilitates the elimination of broken or damaged tissues and poisonous matters and other noxious wastes which impinge on the proper functioning of the body systems. It is known in Urhobo as *ameanyoma.*

Hydrotherapy involves the use of cold, hot, compressed and steam vapour baths. Cold and hot baths, in combination with some herbs, are used for the treatment of different diseases. The fusion is then used for fever, headache, rheumatism, and general pains. The hot bath not only makes the skin capillaries relax but also increases the activity of the sweat glands. It has been discovered that water increases the consumption of oxygen to about 75%, while about 85% of the carbon dioxide in the body is eliminated through the use and consumption of water.

The compressed bath comprises of a piece of cloth wrung out of hot or cold water which is applied to some part of the body to produce the desired temperature. Hot fomentation is especially useful in the treatment of ailments such as pains, soreness, inflammation, rheumatic troubles, swellings and so on, while cold bath is used mainly to reduce high temperature and nose bleeding. Urhobo traditional midwives use hot fomentation for newly delivered mothers to relieve pain, relax the muscles and to allow the distended muscles of the uterus and tummy assume their normal positions.

8. Fasting

Urhobo healers use *owevwechiro* (fasting) to cure ailments like obesity, indigestion, overweight, mental diseases and chronic diseases. Even dogs, cats, goats, and other domestic animals fast for days to enable them recover early from an ailment.

Eating too much, without corresponding exercise and proper elimination of the waste, results in overloading and overworking of the body systems. Ecclesiastics 37:30-31 puts this clearly as follows: "Overeating brings sickness, and gluttony leads to nauseas. Many have

died of gluttony, and he who is careful to avoid it prolongs his life." Overeating retards the process of digestion and elimination, eventually producing a condition known as autointoxication or self-poisoning. Autointoxication is the underlying cause of some acute diseases. Fasting in a situation like this yields good results within a short time and the most effective means of eliminating such waste. Hence, Mume describes fasting as

> the most effective means of body house cleaning known. Fasting is an eliminator of accumulated toxins as well as a general restorative. Fasting is a purifying process. It brings about a rapid elimination of toxic elements and poisonous materials from the body.[21]

Fasting is often prescribed before drinking some concoctions. Usually, this mode of treatment might continue for some time until the ailment is completely cured.

9. Faith-Healing

In Urhobo faith healing is associated with medico-religious practices. In the ancestral cult, the patient who committed an offence against the member/s of the family and is being tortured by them is made to confess his/her sin. After the confession, the patient is relieved emotionally after he has been pronounced forgiven. This is also the function of sacrifice in Urhobo medicine. Sacrifice helps to relieve the patient of all his emotional worries, which might be the underlying cause of the disease. Ezeabasili perceives the understanding of African medicine not only in knowing the therapeutics but "also a good knowledge of the dynamics of the culture especially the importance of sacrifice – the crucial psychological points of all cults and an essential bond between man and deity."[22] According to the findings of the same researcher, Professor Lambo, a renowned psychiatrist, has also attested to the therapeutic function of sacrifices.

Faith healing is also adopted in Igbeuku, Igbeubiesha, and other similar sects of Urhobo traditional religion. These cults play a significant role in Urhobo medicine. They are robbing herbalists of many clients.

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[21]J. O. Mume, *Traditional Medicine in Nigeria*, Agbarho: JOM Tradomeblical Naturopathic Hospital, 1978, 65. It should be noted that most of the information on Urhobo therapeutic processes is gleaned from this work; Mume also discusses the eight therapeutic methods in it.

[22]N. Ezeabasili, *African Science: Myth or Reality*, New York: Vantage Press, 1977, 53.

Members of these cults forbid the use of any herbal and orthodox medicine. Their emphasis is on faith healing through the application of the native chalk (orhe) in the treatment of diseases.[23]

Faith healing of Igbeuku, Igbeubiesha, and other similar cults is beneficial in treating psychologically and emotionally induced ailments. Its armamentarium includes the invocation of incantations and prayers preceded by vigorous dancing which is a guilt-reducing situation. This situation makes for effective treatment of anxiety, inferiority complex, suspicion, faultfinding, and so on. These cults claim authority over wizard and witch induced diseases, demon possession, and sinful ones whose guilty conscience tortures incessantly. These cults compare favourably with all the shades of Christian healing ministries whose emphasis is also on faith. Faith is the bedrock for the acceptance and appropriation of the power of Jesus. As Jesus admonishes the apostles, "If you had faith as a grain of mustard seed you could say to this sycamore tree, 'Be rooted up, and be planted in the sea', and it would obey you" (Luke 17:16).

10. Conclusion

Various therapeutic systems that exist in Urhobo medicine have linkage with other cultural systems. Some of the therapeutic methods have been scientifically developed in other parts of the world and introduced into orthodox medicine. The most recent is the Chinese acupuncture. Nigeria, with its greatest number of therapeutic methods, is capable of developing her own medical system. The problem with it is that the people of Nigeria have been so brainwashed by the missionaries and British colonial government to the extent that Nigerian government as well as the public tends to hate everything Nigerian. The colonial government and missionaries painted the traditional medical practitioner as a sort of quintessence of evil. He is regarded as "insensible to ethics; he represents

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[23]E. O. Okolugbo, "The Olise-Igbe Religious Movement," *Socio-Philosophical Perspective of African Traditional Religion*, eds., E. Ekpunobi and I. Ezeaku, Enugu: New Age Publisher, 1990, 14. Okolugbo describes the hierarchy in its priesthood and their functions. From the exchange of letters between Bernard Uyo, Omonedo's son and the A. D. O. of Ase District when Omonedo was arrested and subsequently convicted, added to the elucidation of the main issues involved in this aspect of Urhobo Religion.

not only the absence of value, but also the negation of values. He is the enemy of values, and in this sense he is the absolute evil."[24]

In general, the attitude of many Urhobo (Nigerians) towards their cultural values and heritage has been very negative. The attitude of the government towards traditional medicine has been discouraging, backed by the orthodox doctors who view traditional practitioners as rivals. However, since 1980 in consonance with the World Health Organisation declaration that local materials and personnel should be utilized for the local health care delivery system of the people, the Nigerian government has changed her attitude. But a place of prominence has not yet been accorded to it. There are still some laws which do not give a free hand to the practitioners of ethno-medicine.

Traditional healers are handicapped in issuing sick certificates to their patients who are in paid employment. In most cases when workers are sick and are treated, the employers usually request for medical certificates to authenticate the workers' claims. Such certificates issued by the traditional healers have never been accepted by employers because the former have no *locus standi* to give medical certificates.[25] This disability suffered by traditional healers is consequent on the fact that most of the employment opportunities were provided by the colonial government and Christian missions who had frontal confrontation with everything traditional. They specifically organized campaigns of vilification against enthnomedicine and its practitioners, and were inelegantly dubbed with all sorts of designations. Another factor is the inability of the traditional practitioners to read and write. Most, if not all, of the Urhobo healers are illiterate and as such are incapacitated to issue such certificates.

Traditional healers are not invited to magistrate and high courts to give evidence on charges bordering on their medical practice. For instance, if a criminal charge is preferred against a psychiatric patient who had treatment under them, they may not be invited to give their expert evidence. Apart from the vile attitude of the government against them, they themselves have their shortcomings arising from their illiteracy and,

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[24]F. Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, France: Francois Maspero editeur, 1961, 32.

[25]T. Asuni, "Modern Medicine and Traditional Medicine," *African Therapeutic Systems*, eds., Z. A. Ademuwagun, J. A. A. Ayoade et al., Massachusetts: Crossroad, 1978, 179.

consequently, their inability to keep records. Their illiteracy, coupled with inability to keep records, has created serious problems for ethnomedical practitioners and are, therefore, incapable of dealing with their professional legalities.

Traditional healers run the risk of being charged with manslaughter for the death of a patient under their care. It is mandatory that death certificate should be issued before burial. Here, again, the traditional healer is exposed to a difficult situation since he was not trained or informed about the type of death certificate acceptable to law.

These disabilities are administratively imposed on the ethnomedical practitioners. These dilemmas could be resolved by a positive change of attitude by government towards traditional healers. This will ultimately lead to changing the laws which adversely deal with practitioners of traditional medicine.

It is hoped that the mass literacy programme embarked upon by both the Federal and State Governments will reduce to the minimum the high rate of illiteracy among the Urhobo healers. There is also the need to organize seminars and workshops for traditional healers where they will be educated on modern trends in medical practice. For, as Asuni puts it, "No matter what doubt anyone may have about traditional healers, it has to be accepted that they are still fulfilling a very useful function in the community."[26]

Traditional medicine is practised in a dynamic society, which is constantly in flux as a result of scientific and technological advancements. There is, therefore, no doubt that traditional medicine and its practitioners need a touch of science and technology if they are to be relevant to the medical needs and aspirations of the people. More concerted efforts should be made towards the development of Urhobo (Nigerian) medicine so that the health consumers will be able to benefit maximally from both orthodox and traditional medical systems. In this way, Nigeria with the greatest number of healing processes will be able to make its impact felt in the overall practice of medicine, towards the maintenance, preservation, and enhancement of human life.

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[26]Asuni, "Modern Medicine and Traditional Medicine," 179.

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KANT ON INCLINATIONS: 'ALIEN' OR 'HUMAN'?

Saju Chackalackal♦

1. Introduction

The central thrust of Kant's ethics is practical as well as transcendental with its emphasis on the synthetic *a priori* nature of the moral law in the form of the categorical imperative. Kant defends the necessity and universality that are characteristic features of the moral law with a view to safeguard its transcendental justification and employment in the sensible world. In this process, however, he assigns an "alien" status to human inclinations, which technically includes human interests, desires, emotions, etc. The assumption that Kant's moral perspective, by necessity, revolves around an integral human person calls for a reconsideration and appraisal of the role of human inclinations in realizing human destiny.

2. Pure Reason versus Impure Inclinations

Kant clearly holds that only a moral theory based on reason could be sufficiently universal, and command with necessity. To this effect, both *Critique of Pure Reason* and the *Critique of Practical Reason* approach human cognitions and faculties from the perspective of maintaining the synthetic *a priori* nature of the moral law, so much so that anything other than the rational moral motive is rejected as spurious. A passage in the Preface of the *Groundwork* sets the tone of Kant's approach for the rest of his career:

> Everyone must admit that a law has to carry with it absolute necessity if it is to be valid morally – valid, that is, as a ground of obligation; ... the obligation must be looked for, not in the nature of man nor in the circumstances of the world in which he is placed, but solely *a priori* in the concepts of pure reason; and that every other precept based on principles of mere experience – and even a precept that may in a certain sense be considered universal, so far as it rests in its slightest part,

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> perhaps only in its motive, on empirical grounds – can indeed be called a practical rule, but never a moral law.[1]

Therefore, the role of inclinations and desires is met with the same fate in Kant's critical ethics as their presence and activity within the human person are considered to adversely affect the motive in the spectrum of moral practice. Moreover, any of our attempts to make moral principles out of knowledge drawn from experience is labelled as "the grossest and most pernicious errors."[2] For experience leaves us without any "*certain* moral principles, either to guide judgment or to discipline the mind in fulfilling our duty; for such precepts must be given *a priori* by pure reason alone."[3]

Kant holds that pure reason is practical, which means that pure reason is capable of determining the will by its own principles, that is, independently of any antecedent interest or desire, and of providing the principle or motive to act or not to act accordingly. Moreover, both in the intent and the content of his critical philosophy, Kant is explicit with regard to the unique place of reason in human beings and, thus, in the whole architectonic of pure reason. His insertion of the word *pure* along with practical reason in each of the main headings of the second *Critique* indicates the difference in the viewpoints of the theoretical and the practical approach with regard to empirical aspects. While employing theoretical reason *without* empirically considering its object leads to illusion, "the practical standpoint [of] reason runs into illusion when it tries to reach conclusions *by* considering its object empirically."[4] Kant is vehemently against all those who claim that morality has an impure source and demands that it must be kept pure without being defiled by any other non-rational faculties.[5] He upholds the primacy of reason, and that unless reason is capable of raising us to a status above the animals that are devoid of reason, and to fit us for "higher purposes," the claim of possessing the faculty of reason is in itself worthless.[6] This thrust is central to Kant's

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[1]Kant, *Groundwork*, Ak. IV, 389 (Paton 57).

[2]Kant, *Metaphysic of Morals*, Ak. VI, 215 (Gregor 12).

[3]Kant, *Metaphysic of Morals*, Ak. VI, 217 (Gregor 15), emphasis added.

[4]Palmquist, Kant's System of Perspectives, 248.

[5]In the second *Critique* he insists that "moral feeling is ... produced solely by reason." Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 76 (Beck 79).

[6]See Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 61 (Beck 63); Kant, *Education*, Ak. IX, 442, 447 (Churton 2, 13).

practical philosophy so much so that it dictated even the very structure of the second *Critique* in contradistinction to that of the first. He writes at the end of the introduction:

> ... In the present work we begin with principles and proceed to concepts, and only then, if possible, go on to the senses, while in the study of speculative reason we had to start with the senses and end with principles. Again the reason for this lies in the fact that here we have to deal with a will and to consider reason not in relation to objects but in relation to this will and its causality. The principles of the empirically unconditioned causality must come first, their application to objects, and finally their application to the subject and its sensuous faculty. The law of causality from freedom, i.e., any pure practical principle, is the unavoidable beginning and determines the objects to which it alone can be applied.[7]

Later, in a section entitled "Critical Elucidation of the Analytic of Pure Practical Reason," he draws an analogy (though a wrong one)[8] between the structure of the first and second *Critiques* whereby he insists that sensibility within the Aesthetic section of the latter is "regarded not as a faculty of intuition but merely as feeling (which can be a subjective ground of desire)."[9] This is indicative of the primacy of reason and the irrelevance or deprecating role assigned to inclinations in the whole of Kant's ethics. His preoccupation to safeguard and uphold the transcendental purity of the moral law so as to make it the necessary and universal rule of life had an adverse influence upon our 'non-rational' faculties, to the extent of considering them irrelevant and even detrimental to the moral law.

As early as in 1770, i.e., starting with the *Inaugural Dissertation*, Kant is found to have rejected the moral sense theory along with its principles of pleasure to be capable of providing the first principles of morality, and to have held that only through the pure intellect we can know the first principles of moral judgment. While he insists in the first *Critique* that no concepts, including the formulation of the categories, can be thought without first being given in (possible or actual) intuition, practical

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[7]Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 16 (Beck 16).

[8]See the footnote (5) inserted by Beck in his translation of Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 90 (Beck 93).

[9]Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 90 (Beck 93).

concepts are justified by the fact of pure reason, without needing any appeal to empirical or pure intuitions.[10]

Consciousness of the moral law for a moral agent, according to Kant, requires no further confirmation as against the injunction of the first *Critique*; for practical reason deals not with *what is*, but *what ought to be*, which, he insists, cannot be confirmed or validated by anything in the realm of the actual: "... so far as nature is concerned, experience supplies the rules and is the source of truth, in respect of the moral laws it is, alas, the mother of illusion! Nothing is more reprehensible than to derive the laws prescribing what *ought to be done* from what *is done*...."[11] For, as Kemp Smith writes in his commentary, "the actual is not test of the Ideal; 'what is' is not test of what ought to be. And ... the moral law, if valid after all, must apply not merely within the limits of experience, but with absolute universality to all rational beings."[12]

Practical concepts are said to produce the reality to which they refer by an intention of the will, requiring no intuition to determine the object they are referring to: "The morally good ... is something which, by its object, is supersensuous; nothing corresponding to it can be found in sensuous intuition."[13] The knowledge of the fact of moral law gives content to the practical concepts and, thus, they require no further schematisation or construction in intuition for a definite constitutive employment. Kant holds that "the moral law has no other cognitive faculty to mediate its application to objects of nature than the understanding (not the imagination); and the understanding can supply to an idea of reason not a schema of sensibility but a law."[14] So, he consistently rules out any role to inclinations in determining the nature of the moral law, and maintains that any action motivated by desires may have only "legality but not morality."[15] All the more, he considers that "all admixture of incentives which derive from one's own happiness are a hindrance to the influence of the moral law on the human heart," and, hence, the moral law is more powerful "the more purely it is presented."[16]

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[10]Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 66 (Beck 68).
[11]Kant, CPR A318-19/B375.
[12]Kemp Smith, *A Commentary*, page 572.
[13]Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 68 (Beck 70-71).
[14]Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 69 (Beck 71-72).
[15]Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 71 (Beck 74); see also Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 74-75 (Beck 77).
[16]Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 156 (Beck 160).

3. Heteronomy and Immorality

Kant consistently degrades the role of non-rational faculties in his treatment of the moral law, and any action performed under the influence of them is considered to be falling under the "mechanism of nature,"[17] and hence heteronomous and immoral or non-moral: "Our actions are determined either practically, i.e., in accordance with laws of freedom, or pathologically, in accordance with laws of our sensuous nature."[18] Moreover, he holds that "the man who does a thing because it is pleasant is pathologically determined."[19] According to his evaluation, most of the ethical theories before him were conditioned by the pathological desires (i.e., anything other than the moral law, in general) and, thus, are objectionable. As against such theories, he maintains that the key to the determination of the will and, hence, any valid moral theory, is only through the moral law: "as a free will, and thus not only without co-operating with sensuous impulses but even rejecting all of them and checking all inclinations so far as they could be antagonistic to the law, it is determined merely by the law."[20] This law being the form of an intellectual causality, then, is able to positively restrict or *strike down* the power of inclination so as to become "an object of the greatest respect and thus the ground of a positive feeling which is not of empirical origin ... [and] can be known *a priori*."[21]

Inclination (*Neigung*) indicates a need, and, as Kant puts it in *Anthropology*, is "a subject's sensuous desire which has become customary (habit)."[22] It belongs to the determined physical and psychological nature of human beings; it just happens to us, and therefore, we cannot choose either to have or not to have such an inclination or desire. It results when the predisposition to the desire of some enjoyment has been fulfilled, and the object of desire has been experienced or enjoyed in a habitual manner: "Habitual sensuous desire is called inclination,"[23]

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[17]Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 97 (Beck 100); see also Kant, CPR A418-19/B446-47.

[18]Kant, *Lectures on Ethics* (Infield), 14.

[19]Kant, *Lectures on Ethics* (Infield), 16.

[20]Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 72 (Beck 75).

[21]Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 73 (Beck 76).

[22]Kant, *Groundwork*, Ak. IV, 413n (Paton 81) and Kant, *Anthropology* (Dowdell), 172.

[23]Kant, *Anthropology* (Dowdell), 155; also Kant, *Metaphysic of Morals*, Ak. VI, 212 (Gregor 9).

which includes both emotions and passions (which differ only in degree and quality). Kant also considers that the subjection of a human being to emotions and passions is "an illness of mind" as they "exclude the sovereignty of reason."[24] In the introduction to the *Metaphysic of Morals* he holds that "unless reason holds the reins of government in its own hands, man's feelings and inclinations assume mastery over him,"[25] which, according to him, is unacceptable from a moral point of view. Therefore, he is against according any value to them in determining the moral law. In the second *Critique* he writes:

> Inclination, be it good-natured or otherwise, is blind and slavish; reason, when it is a question of morality, must not play the part of mere guardian of the inclinations, but, without regard to them, as pure practical reason it must care for its own interest to the exclusion of all else. Even the feeling of sympathy and warm-hearted fellow-feeling, when preceding the consideration of what is duty and serving as a determining ground, is burdensome even to right-thinking persons, confusing their considered maxims and creating the wish to be free from them and subject only to law-giving reason.[26]

In contrast to those actions done from duty (*aus Pflicht*), those from inclination (*aus Neigung*) stem from our sensuous, as opposed to our rational, nature. However, as they emerge from a need, and as they are being incorporated into our maxims, it is possible that they be mistakenly identified as supreme practical principles, whereby rendering actions heteronomous and, thus, uprooting moral intentions. On this basis he finds empiricism more reprehensible than mysticism:

> It substitutes for duty something entirely different, namely, an empirical interest, with which inclinations generally are secretly in league. For this reason empiricism is allied with the inclinations, which, no matter what style they wear, always degrade mankind when they are raised to the dignity of a supreme practical principle. But these inclinations are so favourable to everyone's feelings that

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[24]Kant, *Anthropology* (Dowdell), 155.

[25]Kant, *Metaphysic of Morals*, Ak. VI, 408 (Gregor 70).

[26]Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 118 (Beck 122-23). Elsewhere he holds that "the prudent man must at no time be in a state of emotion, not even in that of sympathy with the woes of his best friend, is an entirely correct and sublime moral precept of the Stoic school because emotion makes one (more or less) blind." Kant, *Anthropology* (Dowdell), 158.

> empiricism is far more dangerous than all mystical enthusiasm, which can never be a lasting condition for any great number of persons.[27]

So, both the source of inclination and its dependence on sensibility, and its aligning with empirical interests with a motive for happiness,[28] and the thrust on striving for its own satisfaction[29] set it apart as unworthy of a moral motive and even detrimental to it. That is to say, only "a universally valid law that is not derived from the contents of our inclinations alone and can motivate us independently of them is a clearly *necessary* condition of any proper understanding of duty."[30] So, being the product of nature (as against freedom), and desired not for its own sake but only for the sake of satisfying ends outside itself (hence, unworthy to serve as a foundation to the categorical imperative), an inclination is held to be unfit to participate in the formulation of and adherence to the moral principles; nay, for Kant, natural inclinations are opposed to or obstacles for the attainment of virtue, whereby they are considered "evil in [themselves], absolutely reprehensible, and must be completely eradicated."[31]

4. Kantian Call to Reject Inclinations

Given the nature of inclinations and their "conditioned value" with regard to the moral law, Kant holds that the attempt of every rational agent should be to distance oneself from them: "Inclinations themselves, as sources of needs, are so far from having an absolute value to make them desirable for their own sake that it must rather be the universal wish of every rational being to be wholly free from them."[32] This is so because, in themselves not being unconditionally valuable, inclinations lack any objective ground

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[27]Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 71 (Beck 74).

[28]Kant, *Metaphysic of Morals*, Ak. VI, 480, 482 (Gregor 153, 155).

[29]Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 146 (Beck 152).

[30]Guyer, Kant and the Experience of Freedom, 344.

[31]Kant, *Religion*, Ak. VI, 58 (Greene & Hudson 51). In another passage he holds that *Willkür* is corrupted by making our "lower incentives supreme among its maxims." That is to say, in choosing ends and actions according to maxims that have a sensible origin, the will subordinates reason to the pursuit of non-rational ends. See Kant, *Religion*, Ak. VI, 42 (Greene & Hudson 38). His detrimental remark on inclinations goes further in holding that the passions (the persisting or more powerful inclinations) are incurable "cancerous sores for pure practical reason." Kant, *Anthropology* (Dowdell), 181.

[32]Kant, *Groundwork*, Ak. IV, 428 (Paton 95-96).

or principle for action, as they are the unstable and unreliable subjective desires that have become customary through mere habit.

> Whatever ... is derived from the special predisposition of humanity, from certain feelings and propensities, and even, if this were possible, from some special bent peculiar to human reason and not holding necessarily for the will of every rational being – all this can indeed supply a personal maxim, but not a law: it can give us a subjective principle – one on which we have a propensity and inclination to act – but not an objective one on which we should be *directed* to act although our every propensity, inclination, and natural bent were opposed to it...[33]

Moreover, these natural inclinations cannot be entirely satisfied, as a result of which they create an ever-changing set of needs, the fulfilment of which would be self-defeating with regard to the moral law which is marked by necessity and universality: "No mere sentiments, no matter how favourable to duty, can be relied upon as the motivation to perform duty, for the simple reason that all of our sentiments and inclinations are liable to change in the course of nature."[34] That is, Kant holds that an empirically recognized source lacks moral content (*moralischen Gehalt*) and cannot be the ground of an *a priori* judgment and, thus, cannot serve as an adequate motive for conformity to the moral law.

The inadequacy of inclinations to originate *a priori* necessity and universality characteristic of the moral law, according to Kant, indicates the need to establish the reign of reason by curbing the rule of the former in the practical realm. He holds that "since the sensuous inclinations tempt us to ends (as the matter of choice) which may be contrary to duty, legislative reason can check their influence only by another end, a moral end set up against the ends of inclination, which must therefore be given *a priori*, independently of the inclinations."[35] It is the power of self-determination exercised by the will in independence from all sensuous impulses.[36] As it is with the concept of freedom, it is only in being independent from all sensuous impulses that one is free,[37] and can exercise

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[33]Kant, *Groundwork*, Ak. IV, 425 (Paton 93).

[34]Kant, *Reflection* 6902, Ak. XIX, 201; see also Kant, *Reflection* 7202, Ak. XIX, 277, quoted in Guyer, *Kant and the Experience of Freedom*, 342.

[35]Kant, *Metaphysic of Morals*, Ak. VI, 380-81 (Gregor 38).

[36]See Kant, CPR A534B562, A802/B830.

[37]Kant, *Metaphysic of Morals*, Ak. VI, 213 (Gregor 10).

the capacity of rational choice and spontaneity of reason. Therefore, what is required of us is "the *a priori* subjection of the manifold of desires to the unity of consciousness of a practical reason commanding in the moral law, i.e., of a pure will."[38] Thus, according to Kant, it is not in giving in to the inclinations, but in the active use of the free will that we realize our human nature as against that of the animals[39] and, thus, realize our moral worth.

5. Motive of Duty along with Inclination

In this connection, there arises the question of the moral worth of those actions done both from duty and from inclination. Kant holds that "it is a very beautiful thing to do good to men because of love and sympathetic good will, or to do justice because of a love of order."[40] He also has no objection to inclinations accompanying (*mit Neigung*), or ensuing from, acts that are done out of duty; in such cases motives other than duty serve as "supplementary or cooperating motive that provides needed support for the motive of duty."[41] Moreover, he does not claim that an otherwise morally worthy act would lose its moral significance if an agent has an inclination for the same act. He even holds that "cheerfulness of heart in the discharge of one's duty ... is a sign of the genuineness of a virtuous sentiment."[42] At the same time, however, it must be remembered that doing something that coincides with duty out of an inclination (*aus Neigung*) is not to act out of duty (*aus Pflicht*):

> It stands on the same footing as other inclinations – for example, the inclination for honour, which if fortunate enough to hit on something beneficial and right and consequently honourable, deserves praise and encouragement, but not esteem; for its maxim lacks moral content, namely, the performance of such actions, not from inclination, but *from duty*.[43]

The alternative is to act only from maxims with moral content:

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[38]Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 65 (Beck 67).

[39]It may be interesting to note a statement from Kant's *Reflections*: "Man is an animal who is in need of, and capable of, discipline by reason." Kant, *Reflection* 1499, Ak. XV, page 782; see also Kant, *Reflection* 1500, page 785, both quoted in Velkley, *Freedom and the End of Reason*, 155.

[40]Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 82 (Beck 85).

[41]Korsgaard, Creating the Kingdom of Ends, 58.

[42]Quoted in Webb, Kant's Philosophy of Religion, 98.

[43]Kant, *Groundwork*, Ak. IV, 398 (Paton 66).

> When ... disappointments and hopeless misery have quite taken away the taste for life; when a wretched man, strong in soul and more angered at his fate than faint-hearted or cast down, longs for death and still preserves his life without loving it – not from inclination or fear but from duty; then indeed his maxim has a moral content.[44]

He continues to hold the same all through his ethical writings: what is required, according to the second *Critique*, is "only that we take no account of them [i.e., inclinations] whenever duty is in question."[45] For Kant, it is not enough that good acts are performed with any purpose, but they must be performed with the sole intention of acting out of duty. In this regard, his injunction in the *Metaphysic of Morals* is clear enough: "do your duty from the motive of duty [*handle pflichtmäßig aus Pflicht*]."[46] Against this, any free and spontaneous attempt on the part of a moral agent to assign duty a subordinate position to that of inclinations would turn out to be the root of all moral evil.[47]

6. Constructive Role of Human Inclination

Kant seems, however, to be increasingly positive towards the contributions of the non-rational faculties, although he is unmoved in his central thrust of duty. Even in the *Groundwork* he seems to have held that the pure practical reason must be a "higher faculty of desire" which is able to "supply a motive [*Triebfeder*] and create an interest [*Interesse*] which could be called purely moral."[48] In the second *Critique* also, he refers to a moral feeling or respect for the law, which results from our adherence to

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[44]Kant, *Groundwork*, Ak. IV, 398 (Paton 65-66).

[45]Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 93 (Beck 96). See also Kant, *On the Old Saw*, Ak. VIII, 278 (Ashton 45).

[46]Kant, *Metaphysic of Morals*, Ak. VI, 391 (Gregor 50). It may be added that for Kant there is no question of considering an action as morally worthy when done both from duty and from inclination at the same time. In order to be moral it has to be performed from duty, and only from duty; if not, he would insist that it is risky (*bedenklich*) to let other motives cooperate (*mitwirken*) with the moral law. See Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 72 (Beck 75).

[47]Kant, *Religion*, Ak. VI, 36 (Greene & Hudson 31).

[48]Kant, *Groundwork*, Ak. IV, 461 (Paton 129); see also *Groundwork*, Ak. IV, 413n (Paton 81). In order to arrive at purely moral motives, we have to attend "to the necessity with which reason prescribes them to us and ... [eliminate] from them all empirical conditions, which reason directs." Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 30 (Beck 29).

the moral law motivated by our recognition of the law itself; it is not "antecedent" to but "produced solely by reason."

> Respect for the law is not the incentive to morality; it is morality itself, regarded subjectively as an incentive, inasmuch as pure practical reason, by rejecting all the rival claims of self-love, gives authority and absolute sovereignty to the law. It should be noticed that, as respect is an effect on feeling and thus on the sensibility of a rational being, it presupposes the sensuous and hence the finitude of such beings on whom respect for the moral law is imposed; thus respect for the law cannot be attributed to a supreme being or even to one free from all sensibility, since to such a being there could be no obstacle to practical reason.[49]

That is, as our rationality is mixed with sensibility, in order that the moral law is carried out (but not as a motive) it must be able to generate specifically *moral sentiments* that can counter other opposing incentives. Further in the *Metaphysic of Morals*, he holds that we have an indirect duty to cultivate sympathetic feelings, which would strengthen our resolve for duty:

> ... It is our duty: not to avoid places where we shall find the poor who lack the most basic essentials, but rather to seek them out; not to shun sick-rooms or debtors' prisons in order to avoid the painful sympathetic feelings that we cannot guard against. For this is still one of the impulses which nature has implanted in us so that we may do what the thought of duty alone would not accomplish.[50]

The intent of this passage is not to say that such feelings would motivate a moral agent to act from duty, but only that with them he or she would be in a better position to practise duty, though clearly it is not to act *from* inclination, but only *with* it. To be more precise, strictly speaking it is not an inclination (as if an impulse or emotion, or passion) but an interest which can lead us to actions directed according to policies and plans under the dictates of the moral law: "An interest is that in virtue of which reason becomes practical – that is, becomes a cause determining the will. Hence only of a rational being do we say that he takes an interest in something:

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[49]Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 76 (Beck 78-79). We find Kant insisting on this from his *Groundwork* onwards: "*Duty is the necessity to act out of reverence for the law.*" Kant, *Groundwork*, Ak. IV, 400 (Paton 68).

[50]Kant, *Metaphysic of Morals*, Ak. VI, 457 (Gregor 126).

non-rational creatures merely feel sensuous impulses."[51] These moral interests, which are also known as moral feelings, or respect for the law, however, as "natural dispositions of the mind (*praedispositio*) to be affected by concepts of duty" "lie at the basis of morality, as *subjective* conditions of our receptiveness to the concept of duty."[52]

In this connection Kant recognizes that the task of reason is not merely to rule over inclinations (which arise independently of it), but to be instrumental in their origination, and to play a role in their modification and moral cultivation. For, he maintains that from a natural point of view, there are many inclinations "which the living nature (every man) cannot be without."[53] Thus, reason has to appropriate and make its own by restructuring them into judgments according to the moral law. Cox holds that the impulses are not guided by reason as a horse is driven by its rider, but are to be "incorporated into rational judgments more in the way that an organism assimilates food,"[54] implying that they are not accorded an *alien* status, but are integral to the moral agent.

7. Rejection of a Moral Role to Inclination

Despite Kant's claim that inclinations and feelings belong to what is given, they are not objects we can observe with our senses, and in that sense they "lie outside our whole faculty of knowledge,"[55] and "yield no knowledge."[56] At the same time, they are classified as belonging to the phenomenal world by which they are made incapable of having any legitimate role in a moral theory. This creates a peculiar situation with regard to their nature and status, and reflects the unease with which Kant deals with them in critical philosophy. His overstress on the problems

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[51]Kant, *Groundwork*, Ak. IV, 459n (Paton 128); see also Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 74-75 (Beck 77-78).

[52]Kant, *Metaphysic of Morals*, Ak. VI, 399 (Gregor 59). In the second *Critique* Kant holds that "even an inclination to do that which accords with duty (e.g., beneficent acts) can at most facilitate the effectiveness of moral maxims but not produce them." Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 118 (Beck 122). Later, in the *Critique of Judgment*, we find him emphasizing the positive side of the moral feeling than he does in the second *Critique* (Kant, CJ §29, Ak. V, 271 (Bernard 111-12)).

[53]Kant, *Anthropology* (Dowdell), 174.

[54]Cox, The Will at the Crossroads, 76.

[55]Kant, CPR A801n/B829n.

[56]Kant, *Metaphysic of Morals*, Ak. VI, 400 (Gregor 60).

associated with inclinations against developing a morality founded only on the motive of duty seems not to do justice to the former as they are very much part and parcel of every human being. At least, it must be admitted that inclinations are not the result of a mechanical causality as it is assumed to be functioning in the animal kingdom. In fact, they cannot be held to be responsible for moral evil, which can be attributed only to our will.[57] His own recognition of moral feelings, especially the respect for the moral law, points to the fact that they are the result of an integral and simultaneous application of *human* reason and *human* desire; and what results is uniquely human and it cannot be *animal* in any way.[58] Moreover, in the second *Critique*, Kant admits that "to be free from their influence," and "origin," or a "complete independence from inclinations and desires" is beyond human beings as it "can be ascribed only to the supreme being."[59] It is difficult, then, to understand why and how according a rightful place to inclinations in Kant's moral theory should adversely affect the "strict laws of duty" or "throw doubt on their validity," or still further, "pervert their very foundations and destroy their whole dignity."[60]

The very fact of the inner struggle that Kant is referring to in the practice of morality is indicative of their permanent and permeating presence along with the rational faculties and, hence, their legitimate human origin. This is not to be seen merely as occasioning a battle between two opposing and impersonal forces, and the human being to be a helpless and passive spectator of the war between reason and desire. For, we are endowed not merely with rationality in order to fully realize our humanity, but a whole lot of other faculties (all of them being fully human), an integration of which is essential to any theory – including ethics – that has humanity at its centre.

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[57]See e.g., Kant, *Groundwork*, Ak. IV, 398 (Paton 66); Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 32-33 (Beck 32-33); Kant, *Religion*, Ak. VI, 34-35, 57-58 (Greene & Hudson 30, 50-51).

[58]By way of distinction: an animal will is the will of a being that is determined (as it is known to us) entirely by efficient causes of sensuous impulses; a human will, on the contrary, is the will of a being with the power of judgment, the ability to synthesize sensuous impulses and even alter their conjunctions with another in practical judgments which can revise such impulses. See Cox, *The Will at the Crossroads*, 93.

[59]Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 118 (Beck 123).

[60]Kant, *Groundwork*, Ak. IV, 405 (Paton 73).

8. A Biased Kantian Division of Faculties

There seems to be a serious problem in Kant's division of human faculties into reason, will, and inclination (for our purpose here, including emotions, passions, interests, etc., put together under the faculty of desire[61]), which is the generally accepted understanding about a human being. Undue stress on this division,[62] in terms of a watertight compartmentalization, identifying their roles in opposition to each other, which Kant utilizes to formulate his critical human faculty structure, is suspicious. The question before us is: do we have many faculties having different functions associated with each of them, or only a single one that can assume different functions as it is being applied differently? An integral view of a human being (which is at the basis of an integral ethics, too) prompts for an integral faculty having its source in our intellect.[63] The more general and abstract its function tends to be, we call it reason, which, in turn, would be able to make equally general and abstract applications, giving rise to principles. For Kant reason is "the faculty of principles."[64] When the general and abstracted content of the intellect (by reason) tends to motivate action, or is put into practice in relation to our uniquely human nature and conscious actions we call it will. In the *Groundwork*, Kant holds that the will is "the power to act in accordance with his idea of laws, that is, in accordance with principles."[65] Those that are less abstract, but closely related to the concrete individual dimensions and situations are the inclinations. In this understanding laws are derived by reason, as it is able to make abstractions and generalizations on the content of subjective

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[61]Kant, *Groundwork*, Ak. IV, 413n (Paton 81).

[62]In the *Metaphysic of Morals* Kant explicitly holds this triple division of our faculties: "... the force in you that strives only toward happiness is *inclination*; but the power that limits your inclination to the condition of your first being worthy of happiness is your *reason*; and your power to restrain and overcome your inclination by your reason is the freedom of your will" Kant, *Metaphysic of Morals*, Ak. VI, 481 (Gregor 154).

[63]In the first *Critique*, while dealing with the structure of pure speculative reason, Kant calls upon the need to consider everything as an *organ*, in which "the whole [is] for the sake of every part, and every part for the sake of all the others..." Kant, CPR Bxxxviii. Kant's later development of teleological doctrine in the *Critique of Judgment* is reflected here. See Chackalackal, *Unity of Knowing and Acting in Kant*, 480ff.

[64]Kant, CPR A299/B356; Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 119 (Beck 124).

[65]Kant, *Groundwork*, Ak. IV, 412 (Paton 80).

experiences, from which principles and laws can be arrived at.[66] From the abstracted content reason makes a leap into the perfect mode ('platonically' corresponding to the actual) whereby it is able to give rise to ideas and ideals having the characteristic of stability or permanency, which can be effectively utilized by the will to set the "*ought* to be" in the place of "what *is*." Reason and inclination seem to stand at two extremes only because of abstractions made by the former on the latter; thus, they are not at all constitutively different, but have the same origin. So also, then, their functions cannot be opposed to each other. Acting solely based on inclination is erroneous, especially when applied in relation to our uniquely human actions (by the will), as it would then disregard the capacity of the same intellect for acting according to principles, which it has given rise to and, thus, acting against itself. It is the unique function of the will to bring together in action the principles of reason and the concrete and subjective elements of inclinations, and to give rise to an integral dimension to the working of the intellect in a human person.

If this picture of the integral function of the intellect is right, then, Kant's stringent measures to set apart all inclinations are questionable. Considering inclinations and desires as "alien sources"[67] in critical philosophy is a strange conclusion, especially because inclinations, too, are part of our human nature, and are the most characteristic expressions of a person. Reason and will, which are considered to be authentic, are only so because of the general abstractions made on what one has as *one's own*. Then, it seems to be paradoxical that Kant's critical philosophy has conceded only an 'alien' status to inclinations (which are the natural and spontaneous elements of a human person), and accorded the natural and authentic and, thus, human status to reason and will (i.e., that which is

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[66]The logical priority of the laws does not give them a status to be absolutely free from experience; instead, they result from the collective human consciousness operative at the universal spectrum, and only to that extent they are synthetic and *a priori*. Chackalackal, *Unity of Knowing and Acting in Kant*, 155ff.

[67]Kant, CPR A472n/B500n. Kant intents this to be only a "non-moral source;" however, despite the fact that the inclinations are not the primary source to determine duty, it is unjustifiable to call them 'alien'. In the second *Critique* Kant holds that man "can never be wholly free from desires and inclinations which, because they rest on physical causes, do not of themselves agree with the moral law, *which has an entirely different source*." Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 84 (Beck 86), emphasis added. See also Kant, *Enlightenment*, Ak. VIII, 34 (Beck 4).

derived from the natural). The stress that Kant lays on reason and will, at the exclusion of inclinations, reflects the undue importance that he grants to necessity and universality as the characteristic elements of critical philosophy.[68] It is true that necessity and universality can be ascribed only on generalizations and abstractions; this is especially so as the inclinations are more subjective and concrete, but definitely real and natural, and nothing to be categorized as 'alien' at all. Any step in such a direction is unbecoming of considering human person in totality. Kant holds in his *Lectures on Ethics* that "it is not possible to have the disposal of a part only of a person without having at the same time a right of disposal over the whole person, *for each part of a person is integrally bound up with the whole*."[69] This integration, as Aristotle had already pointed out in his *Nicomachean Ethics*, is a "thoughtful desire" or, alternatively, a "desiring thought"[70] implying a human capacity not only to think but also to desire. Therefore, everything, including inclinations, has its rightful place and role in a human person, without being detrimental to the primacy of duty. Kant rightly expresses it in the first *Critique*: "everything that has its basis in the nature of our powers must be appropriate to, and consistent with, their right employment – if only we can guard against a certain misunderstanding and so can discover the proper direction of these powers."[71]

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[68]In the context of Kant's attempt to fit human faculties to suit his concern for *a priori* necessity and universality, a passage from the first *Critique* may be brought against his own theory: we do not say "that a man is too long for his coat, but that the coat is too short for the man." Kant, CPR A490/B518.

[69]Kant, *Lectures on Ethics* (Infield) 166, emphasis added. Along this line, it may be pointed out that the source of evil can be located in the lack of integration among these three functions of the intellect, where an undue stress on any one at the exclusion of the other(s) would be against the person considered as a single whole, and it is this condition that is known as moral evil. Kant calls it to be man's natural propensity to evil, or the "radical and innate ... evilness in human nature." Kant, *Religion*, Ak. VI, 27 (Greene & Hudson 32).

[70]Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 6.2.1139a36, quoted in Sullivan, *Immanuel Kant's Moral Theory*, 26; see also CPR B166; *Groundwork*, Ak. IV, 459n (Paton 128); CPrR Ak. V, 79 (Beck 82).

[71]Kant, CPR A643-44/B670-71.

9. Conclusion: Towards an Integral Personality

By nature a human being is endowed with three original drives (*Anlagen*) or predispositions the fulfilment or realization of which would be the key to a truly human existence and the attainment of the highest good in the moral world.[72] They are the predispositions to animality, to humanity, and to personality. Animality is our predisposition as a physical being, which strives for self-preservation and preservation of the species as a whole. In other words, it involves our pre-rational, or instinctual basis that preserves, propagates, and cares for our own physical being and our offspring. The predisposition to humanity lays stress on our social being, which sees to it that our natural self-development is achieved, whereby we also acquire worth in the opinion of others.[73] Left to itself, it considers man as a rational animal, and is said to involve a capacity to use reason in the service of inclinations. However, Kant holds that the characteristic of humanity is the power to set an end and to work towards its realization, which involves our capacity to choose,[74] and to desire. The third, the predisposition to personality is our power to adopt the moral law as the end, and our consciousness of being obligated to respect it. So, going beyond the concept of a mere rational animal, a human being is considered as a moral and responsible agent who has "predispositions *toward good* (they enjoin the observance of the law)."[75] Animality and humanity can become unworthy of a human being when they are employed against the moral law, thus against the predisposition to personality. The true nature of a human being can be realized, it seems, only when all of these aspects and faculties of a human person operate in a concerted and integrated manner, where, of course, respect for the moral law, which is our predisposition to personality assumes the decisive role.

What is called for is to complete and perfect our humanity by fully determining our ends by reason, thus responding to the moral incentives:

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[72]Kant, *Religion*, Ak. VI, 26-27 (Greene & Hudson 22-23); see also Allison, *Kant's Theory of Freedom*, 148-49; Sullivan, *Immanuel Kant's Moral Theory*, 237.

[73]Kant, *Anthropology* (Dowdell), 270; Kant, *Religion*, Ak. VI, 26 (Greene & Hudson 21).

[74]*Human* is indirectly defined in terms of *liberum*: Kant, CPR A534/B562. In the third *Critique* humanity is considered as the ultimate end of nature, which can be realized through the exercise of freedom. See Kant, CJ Introduction IX, and §83, Ak. V, 195-96, 431 (Bernard 32-33, 280-81).

[75]Kant, *Religion*, Ak. VI, 28 (Greene & Hudson 23).

this facilitates the realization of our human potential by way of moving closer to the final end of becoming a person. What we try to achieve is the full blossoming of our humanity, of course, in view of realizing our personality, though, according to Kant, we can never be certain of having achieved it.

A moral agent can legitimately aim at the realization of each one's humanity, in terms of his or her capacity for the good will. It is in this regard that the second *Critique* treats humanity and personality in one's own person as if they were identical.[76] It is in our ability to choose the moral law, and in setting our ends only from the motive of duty, taking into consideration the whole human being – with all limitations and prospects – that we can see ourselves as fulfilling our moral vocation. Realization of our humanity, which is in our reach, is the *task*[77] entrusted to us as human beings, and, what ensues from it – on its own – is personality, the perfect realization of our nature: it can be seen as the *gift* that we become worthy to be entrusted with. It would be the perfect harmony between *Wille* and *Willkür*, the legislative will and the elective will. Thus, becoming worthy of this unique gift of personality is a great *burden* – as one does not always act spontaneously out of duty – and the sublime *vocation*,[78] as it is the final destiny – of every human being.

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[76]Kant, CPrR Ak. V, 87 (Beck 89-90); see also Kant, *Groundwork*, Ak. IV, 428-29 (Paton 95-96).

[77]In his "What is Enlightenment?" Kant calls for self-actualised maturity – to be worthy of human beings: "It is so convenient to be immature! If you have a book to have understanding in place of me, a spiritual advisor to have a conscience for me, a doctor to judge my diet for me, and so on, I need not make any efforts at all. I need not think, so long as I can pay; others will soon enough take the tiresome job over for me" (Ak. VIII, 35, at http://spice.mhv.net/~mgraffam/phil/kant/enlightenment.html). This requires, as we have already seen, stringent practical measures, i.e., to exercise our own rational and self-governing capacity that would set us apart from the lower animals and impart us with human dignity. For, morally speaking, man makes himself through the autonomous act of self-legislation.

[78]Kant, CPR A317/B374.

BOOK REVIEWS

Lucose Chamakala, ***The Sanctity of Life Vs. The Quality of Life***, Dharmaram Moral Theology Series – 1, Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 2005, pages 255, ISBN: 81-86861-81-5.

The Sanctity of Life Vs. The Quality of Life is a study on the mystery of human life which discusses different ethical theories and proposes a new theology of the Gospel of life and a new sanctity of life ethic in order to protect, preserve and promote the mystery and the dignity of human life, especially in the context of the emerging high-tech healthcare developments.

Concentrating on "the sacredness and inviolability of human life" and considering his "personal interest in the mystery of life" (11) Lucose Chamakala commences his study with analysing the positions of three authors, who represent three ethical approaches, namely, the natural law theory of Germain Grisez, the utilitarian ethic of Helga Khuse and the proportionalism of Richard McCormic.

Besides the general introduction and the general conclusion, this doctoral thesis of the author consists of four chapters. The first three chapters of the work undertake a discussion on the sanctity of life view of Germain Grisez, quality of life view of Helga Khuse and the sanctity of life view of Richard McCormick. The fourth chapter studies the deficiencies of the above three approaches and proposes a new theology of the Gospel of life and a new sanctity of life ethic integrating the positive, creative and liberative elements found in the theories examined.

The author constructs his theory on a solid foundation of "the reality of human life" (11). In his attempt, Lucose clearly and convincingly argues that the purpose of ethics is "to facilitate authentic human life" (11). In the light of the two distinct approaches on human life, namely, the sanctity-of-life and quality-of-life, the author undertakes an "expository, analytical, critical and evaluative" study of these theories "for a better understanding of the mystery of human life, for protecting human dignity and for serving human life better" (12).

Beyond any doubt the author makes his integrative and inclusive approach clear: "neither a sanctity-of-life approach which excludes all

quality-of-life considerations nor a quality-of-life approach which rejects the sanctity of human life can form the basis of a tenable moral approach" (213). While the author points out the obvious deficiencies in the natural law theory of Germain Grisez, utilitarian theory of Helga Khuse and propotionalist theory of Richard McCormick, the author highlights the need for "an integral moral approach which both protects human dignity and respects the inviolability and sacredness of life" (213).

A well-founded and balanced position concerning "the new sanctity of life ethic" is that it "must be based on the fact that every human life is intrinsically good and that no condition of life, however bad, can lessen its intrinsic goodness" (220).

The detailed bibliography and concise index of the book are of great help to the readers who wish to pursue their study in the area of the sanctity-of-life and the quality-of-life. In addition, this is the first volume in the new venture of Dharmaram Moral Theology Series to mark the beginning of the Masters Programme in Moral Theology at Dharmaram Vidya Kshetram, Bangalore. This volume definitely is a great source of inspiration and orientation to both students and scholars in moral theology.

It is a systematic, synthetic and scientific treatise on human life in the field of bio-medical ethics. The arguments are clear, convincing and compelling. *The Sanctity of life Vs. The Quality of Life* is a rational, laudable and pastoral approach on the mystery and dignity of human life. Lucose Chamakala, therefore, deserves appreciation for his excellent, praiseworthy and path-breaking contribution in the field of moral theology.

Paulachan Kochappilly

Joseph Alencherry and Scaria Kanniyakonil, eds., *Bioethical Issues and the Family*, Changanacherry: Cana Publications, 2005, Pages xxxii + 256.

Bioethical Issues and the Family is the inaugural volume of the Cana Publications Series, published from the John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family. The volume contains scientific papers presented

in the symposium on "Bioethics and the Identity of the Family" at the Cana Centre on January 23-24, 2004. There are 12 essays and a learned foreword by William E. May, a detailed Appreciation by Joseph Powathil and a General Introduction by the editors.

In the foreword May clarifies first the Catholic and, then, a widespread understanding of the human person in contemporary bioethics. The latter distinguishes between being a *human being* and being a *human person*. A human person, according to the exponents of the distinction, has developed at least incipiently exercisable cognitive capacities and abilities. That means, being a human being has of itself no significance and May offers a critique of the dualistic anthropology which is behind it. May's evaluation is based on sound theology and mature reflection. In the Appreciation, Joseph Powathil takes up the themes of sterilization, contraception, artificial fertilization, cloning, abortion, organ donation and transplantation, euthanasia and suicide and offers valuable insights, often culled from established theologians and magisterial teachings. General Introduction by the editors and the first article by Alencherry, "Family: The Victim of Biomedical Experimentations," initiate the reader into the area covered in the book. It is contended that recent developments in bioethics have endangered the family in its traditional sense and as a result 'life' is no more the sacrosanct treasure enshrined in the family. This book discusses those issues and tries to present a Catholic appraisal.

In his contribution on "Contraception and the 'Culture of Death'," May convincingly argues that contraception actually serves the culture of death (6-36). It is at the same time thought provoking that even those who abhor the 'culture of death' find the use of contraceptives acceptable! May's argumentation is based on reflection of the underlying anthropology and moral methodology leading to the conclusion that contraception is a choice against life. In the words of May it is anti-love and anti-life. In the next article Jacob Koippally deals with "Morality of Contraception" (37-51). The author approaches the issue from two angles – of magisterial teachings and of theological discussion. Quoting Pope John Paul II, the author claims that to become aware of the intrinsic evil of contraception, "the couple should be evangelized in the depths of their being" (Pope Paul VI).

The article by Hormis Mynatty treats "Certain Moral Considerations of In-Vitro Fertilization and Related Issues" (52-80). The practice of IVF

involves not only clinical, legal and moral issues but also the problem of solving the curse of infertility. The author discusses the morality of homologous IVF at length and the relevant bio-medical researches. Thomas Srampickal presents "Catholic View of Human life and Abortion" (81-99). His study begins with an exposition of the Catholic view of human life and, then, proceeds to the problem of abortion. The author is very much dialogical and his treatment is integral.

The next two articles are on cloning. The first article is by Vincent R. P., who has written on the "Scientific and Ethical Evaluations of Human Cloning" (100-118). The second article is authored by Aleyamma Abraham and is entitled "Morality of Therapeutic Cloning" (119-141). While Vincent discusses the benefits and ethical problematic of cloning before making a scientific and ethical evaluation, Abraham treats the morality of cloning, human embryonic stem cell therapy and human adult stem cell therapy. Both limit themselves to their subject matter and bring their arguments in defense of the dignity of human life and mutuality of conjugal commitment in marriage. Felix Podimattom discusses "Human Genome Project and Gene Therapy" in another article (142-170). He introduces the layman into HGP and GT and provides us with a treatment of the ethics of the latter in a readable manner. The author also discusses the theological problem of immortality which is only a theoretical possibility now.

The next article is written by Kris Dierckx and is titled "Genetic Privacy and the Family: A Moral Theological Approach" (171-184). He begins with the HGP and proceeds to discuss the specific individual character of genetic information and the problems emerging from genetic engineering practised without any ethical consideration. Will the confidential character of the information be kept? How will be the reaction of the family members handled? Such and other questions need to be addressed.

The article by Scaria Kanniyakonil on the "Ethical Appraisal of Living Organ Donation and Transplantation" (185-208) is the result of serious study and reflection. Kanniyakonil discusses different types of transplantation and donations and treats in detail their social, legal, moral, and theological aspects. The case of organ selling in poorer sections of the society for monetary gain is also taken notice of. The book contains one more contribution of May. It is on "Euthanasia, Assisted Suicide and Care of the Dying" (209-237). It is an abridged version of another research on

Bioethics. His treatment of the themes is sufficiently detailed. His critique of the idea of human autonomy behind the voluntary active euthanasia is logical and is based on the principle of intrinsic good of human life and the evil of intentional killing. The act of euthanasia and assisted suicide cannot be but immoral as they deprive the 'victim' of the dignity and worthiness of human life.

The last article is "General Conclusion: Bioethics and the Identity of the Family" (238-251) by Jose Noriega Bastos. He makes a thorough evaluation of family as the cradle of life. An individual is not an island. He is a relational being. Science, though in itself neutral and indifferent, has such wide ramifications so as to control the destiny of an individual and may have dimensions which are beyond the scope of science. Hence, family should be respected as the sanctuary of life where its mystery is lived and unfolded.

It is beyond doubt that stem cell research will usher in a revolution in medical sciences and influence the treatment of diseases like Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, juvenile diabetes, etc., which involve cell-based therapies. Embryonic stem cell research holds the key to such a revolution. Such embryos are called "clusters of cells" (!) and the best usage they may be made available to is research (*The Hindu*, July 3, 2005, 14). An adequate treatment of stem cell research with the basic problem of the status of the embryo would have made the book more complete (Mynatty and Podimattom mention them).

This work is firmly based on the teachings of the church on procreation and life. The editors have done a marvellous job and one can read the book with profit and it is, perhaps, the first book on such a relevant theme to be published in India. The book is aptly dedicated to the memory of Pope John Paul II, the apostle of the "culture of life." Though bio-medical experimentations are in their infancy in our country we cannot remain immune to the developments in this field, in the global village. The conflict of values is more acute in the field of biotechnology than in any other area of research because what is dealt with is life, which is human, alive, and dynamic. Hence, the need of setting clear limits. For example, the manipulation of genes began not with humans but with the nature, of vegetables and cereals. One who follows the discussion on such matters in the European Union or the USA will wonder why the theologians and thinkers in our country keep silence in these matters.

In this context one should appreciate the publishers of this book. All the essays are written by erudite scholars and they have done justice to the respective topics. Each essay is humanely refreshing as well as scientifically challenging.

George Kudilil

Joseph Palackal, '*Qambel Maran*' (2002), Compact Disk with Monograph Booklet on Christian Musical Tradition of India.

Joseph Palackal, holds a doctorate in Musicology and has been among those who pioneered the movement to integrate Indian classical music and *bhajan* traditions in the devotional music of Indian Christians. He is currently engaged in bringing out a book on Indian Christian Musical Traditions and heads the Christian Musicological Society of India.

The production and its accompanying literature constitute a valuable contribution to various fields, as it is an exploration into the history of a significant segment of the multi-cultural Indian society. It is also a rare documentation of some of the various mutually influencing strains of the present Indian culture and music, especially the religious cultures of South India.

The phrase "*qambel maran*," quite familiar to generations of Thomas Christians of the West Coast of India, literally means "receive, Oh Our Lord!" The Malayalam rendering of the same is quite familiar to the Syro-Malabar Christians as "*kaikkollaname*," with which begins one of the most emotive and evocative hymns in the rites for the departed.

The compact disc *Qambel Maran* is very unique and significant on several counts. First, it is a unique collection, of four distinct traditions: (i) of the liturgy of the hours on the ancient Syrian tradition as had been in practice in Kerala from a time as far back as the first millennium; (ii) of the solemn form of Syro-Malabar (or, specifically Syro-Chaldean liturgy); (iii) of the rites for the departed in the same tradition; and (iv) the unique interface in music which shows the Latinizing influence on Indian (read, *Malayali*) Syrian musical tradition. Second, it is more of a historical document, an archival discovery or collection of an ancient and almost

extinct tradition, hitherto unrecorded, and available only to the memory of a small circle of singers of a generation that is gradually disappearing into oblivion. Third, as a record of musical history, it has included, belatedly though, the once vibrant and sonorous voices of a few great men, which would remain as a document for further studies in the style of rendition in Indian Music, in general, and Indian Christian music, in particular. Fourth, this is the only published record of a voice, to the owner of which, the Church of Kerala owes the most, as a single most commonly used source of its rites and rituals, and to whom the modern Christian Musical Movement is indebted, for its origin – the late Reverend Father Abel, a confrere of the Carmelites of Mary Immaculate (CMI).

In short, this can be said to be an archaeological contribution of the author to the field of Indian Christian music, history, and culture. That it is added with relevant music takes away the tedium of dealing with archaeological stuff, when dealt with by lay people in the field. For the scholars of the science of music, this is a valuable piece of documentation of a distinct tradition, and its varied influences.

The accompanying booklet is a brief, but methodically researched description of the Syrian tradition of Christianity in India, with special reference to the four traditions of music mentioned above. The beauty of the documentation lies in the recognition of the flaws in pronunciation and rendition, and apparent lack of gender perspective, and yet, retaining them as an authentic documentation of the tradition, rather than an idealistic presentation. However, the world of Music and Christian community of India would stand to benefit from a version of these rich tracts, which would adequately focus on the various aspects of rendition. Hope the 'excavation' of these rich traditions would lead to newer derivations in the field of music.

The author deserves appreciation for the painstaking effort at researching, documenting, and describing the meaning and the background of each of the compositions. The booklet itself is a very handy material of scholarship. It has also included a good collection of photographs depicting the ancient Christian Art of Kerala, prominent among them being the mesmerising mural of the "Coronation of Mary" in the sanctuary of the ancient church of Pallipuram, incidentally, the author's own parish church.

This is a 'must have' for all centres of learning of Christian traditions – the centres of theological formation, dialogue, culture, chairs of Christian studies, and all libraries linked to the teaching of Indian History and Church History.

Johnson Palakkappillil

Norman A. Hjelm ed., *Faith and Order: Towards a North American Conference* (Study Guide), Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005, pages x+50, ISBN: 0-8028-2914-7.

More than ever before, the Christian communities are becoming conscious of the urgent need of visible unity among the followers of Christ if they are to become effective witness to Him in the world. Due to the alarming speed of scientific advancements, the world is shrinking into a global village, and in this context, the divisions among the followers of Christ are, indeed, scandalous stumbling blocks for the unity of hearts among the nations and cultures. The bold steps taken by *Faith and Order* to accelerate the process of unity among the various Christian communities are a matter of hope, primarily to all the believers who are looking forward to visible unity, and to the world at large where unity and peace are often threatened by the divisive forces. The study guide *Faith and Order: Towards a North American Conference*, edited by Norman A. Hjelm, outlines the goal and purpose of the forthcoming encounter between members of different Christian Traditions in a prayerful and reflective environment.

The introductory statement, signed by the members of the conference, belonging to various Christian traditions, presents the hopes and aspirations of this reunion, and explains clearly the theme selected for the conference: "The Church: Its Faith and Unity." Through the long years of its existence, the goal of the movement has gradually evolved from greater mutual understanding among the churches to the restoration of visible unity. The modern trends in ecumenism have enabled the Christians to listen to the call of the Lord to unity with greater urgency. The final prayer of the Lord can be a reality only when there is visible

unity among the Churches, so that the world may believe the authenticity of our mission in the world.

The Planning consultations for the envisaged Conference brings to light the right mentality and approach every follower of Christ should have: while remaining faithful to one's own history and traditions, every Christian should be prepared for a repentant transformation, to respond to the Holy Spirit, the promoter of *koinonia* that we may feel hunger and thirst for full communion. The diversity of cultures in which the Word of God was preached, indeed, adds to the richness of Christian Heritage. At the same time, tragic divisions among Christians constitute a scandal to the world. Jeffery Gros, while presenting *Faith and Order* from a historical perspective, is hopeful that the envisaged conference will surely provide ample resource for the renewal of the church in unity, in its pilgrim journey. George Vandervelde, in his article on "Unity in Identity," clearly expresses the view that the unity engendered by the conference does not jeopardize the identity of the individual churches which is the fruit of the unique tradition and Christ Experience of a particular community; rather, it aims at an ongoing approximation to the true and full identity of the church as the church of Christ. Then, the church in the modern world will be capable of witnessing to Jesus Christ and his Gospel as it was handed over to us by the Apostles, argues Donna Geernaert.

As Norman A. Hjelm rightly points out, the purpose of this small book is to "foster awareness of the issues surrounding the Faith and Order Movement" and this booklet is meant "for use by laity and clergy in study groups, in congregations, seminaries and variety of ecumenical contexts." Indeed, this endeavour of the *Faith and Order* will be instrumental to quench the thirst for unity among the Christian communities and, thus, to become a true witness to Christ and His message in the world.

Wilson Edattukaran

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